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the Academy of Sciences and Belles Lettres
in Prussia*

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A
PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
H I S T O R Y
OF THE *North*
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
EUROPEANS
IN THE
EAST AND WEST INDIES.

By the ABBÉ RAYNAL. *R*

TO WHICH IS ADDED,
THE REVOLUTION OF AMERICA.
BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

A NEW TRANSLATION.

WITH NOTES, LARGE ADDITIONS AND IMPROVEMENTS,
AND A COPIOUS INDEX.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

EDINBURGH:

Printed for W. GORDON, W. GRAY, J. BELL, J. DICKSON,
& P. ANDERSON, Edinburgh; W. ANDERSON, Stirling;
J. DUNCAN, & DUNLOP & WILSON, Glasgow;
ANGUS & SON, Aberdeen; & E. WILSON, Dumfries.

M,DCC,LXXXII.

PHOTOGRAPHICAL AND LITHOGRAPHICAL

HISTORICAL

SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE

OF THE

EUROPEANS

IN THE

EAST AND WEST INDIES



By the Author

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THE REVOLUTION OF AMERICA

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

A NEW TRANSLATION

WITH NOTES, EXPLANATIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS
AND A CORRECTION

VOLUME THE FIRST

BY THE AUTHOR

Printed by W. G. and W. G. at the
Printers, in the Strand, near
St. Dunstons Church, London.
1801.

W. G. and W. G.

ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE AUTHOR.

SUCH readers as have bestowed any attention on *The Philosophical and Political History of the Settlements and Trade of the Europeans in the East and West Indies*, have easily perceived, that the book has been printed in a very different state from that in which it was composed. The several editions are all alike, as they have all been obliged to copy the first, which was evidently done from a mutilated or altered manuscript.

THE work now at length appears as it came from the hands of the Author. Too many mistakes are still to be found in it: But some indulgence will be granted to a writer who wishes to avail himself of the knowledge which well-informed persons choose to communicate to him.

As the value of foreign coins is not commonly well understood, he has adopted the
method

method of reducing them to *Livres Tournois*.
They are rated as in the following

T A B L E.

	<i>Liv.</i>	<i>Sous.</i>	<i>Den.</i>
Turkish Purse,	1,500	0	0
Cruzado,	4	10	0
Silver Dollar,	1	10	0
Copper Dollar,	0	10	0
Ducat of the Empire,	9	10	0
German Crown,	3	18	0
Dutch Florin,	2	0	0
Livre of the French colonies,	0	13	4
Pound Sterling,	22	10	0
Pagoda,	8	5	0
Piafter,	5	5	0
Rix Dollar,	4	10	0
Roupie,	2	8	0
Chinese Tale,	7	10	0

ADVERT.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE fame of Abbé Raynal, the ingenious Author of the following work, is already so well established, that to say any thing in his praise, would be altogether superfluous.

THE History, of which the present work is a translation, is, beyond all question, his master-piece, and the chief source of that high and deserved admiration which he commands in every civilized country.

It was much regretted, that this celebrated performance did not at first appear in that complete form in which it came from the hands of the Author. By consequence, it could not be given to English readers translated in such a manner as might suit the liberal turn of thinking which distinguishes the inhabitants of this island.

THE first English translation, printed at London in 1776, is evidently done from one of those spurious and mutilated French copies, mentioned in the Author's advertisement. It appears also to have been executed in a hurry. Mistakes and inaccuracies are to be seen in every page; and the errors of the press are very numerous.

NOTWITHSTANDING all these disadvantages, the book met with a most favourable reception from the public. The impression was immediately sold off. In consequence of which, two new editions were undertaken the same year; the one at London, the other at Edinburgh. The latter is said, in the title-page, to be with *great corrections and improvements.*

It

It was, no doubt, an improvement of the former. Many things were altered for the better, and a few passages supplied. But the book still remained very imperfect and inaccurate. Almost in every page omissions may be found. Sometimes two or three words, sometimes as many sentences, and even whole pages are left out in different places. Nor is it accompanied with the Author's notes, which are very useful and entertaining, and sometimes consist of several pages. It also wants, what many will think absolutely necessary in a work of this nature,—an *Index*.

To remedy these defects was the intention of the present undertaking. In it the errors of the former versions are attempted to be corrected—the deficiencies are supplied—*The Revolution of America*, by the same Author, not contained in any former English translation of this work, is also added.—To the whole is subjoined a copious *Index*.

How far the translator has succeeded in his attempt, the public will judge. He is far from thinking there will be no errors found in this work; but he flatters himself they will be fewer in number, and of less consequence, than those of former versions.

For the sake of those unacquainted with the value of French money, the livres have been reduced to Sterling, at the rate of tenpence-halfpenny each. In several instances, where sums are to be added together, the total will not be found to answer; but for this the translator is not accountable, as the sums in the original have been uniformly reduced at the rate above mentioned.

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PHILOSOPHICAL AND POLITICAL
HISTORY
OF THE
SETTLEMENTS AND TRADE
OF THE
EUROPEANS
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EAST AND WEST INDIES.

BOOK I.
INTRODUCTION.

NO event has proved so important to mankind in general, and to the nations of Europe in particular, as the discovery of the new world, and the passage to the East Indies by the Cape of Good Hope. That period gave rise to a revolution in commerce, in the power of nations; in the manners, industry, and government of every people. From this time, new relations, and new wants, produced a mutual intercourse among the inhabitants of the most distant countries. The productions of the Equatorial climates are now consumed in the regions bordering on the Pole; the industry of the North is transferred to the South; the inhabitants of the West have converted the stuffs of the East into articles of luxury; and men every where have bartered their opinions, their laws, their customs, their diseases and remedies, their virtues and vices.

VOL. I.

A

Every

Every thing is changed, and must still change : But have the revolutions that are past, or those which must follow, been, or will they be, of any utility to human nature ? Shall man ever be indebted to them for a single day of tranquillity, happiness, and pleasure ? Will his condition be improved, or will it only be changed ?

The Europeans have, in every quarter of the globe, founded colonies ; but do they know the principles on which colonies ought to be founded ? They have, indeed, by this means, promoted commerce ; œconomy, and industry. But commerce passes from one people to another. Is it not possible to discover by what circumstances this effect is produced ? Since the discovery of America, and the passage by the Cape, nations, formerly inconsiderable, have risen into power ; others, who were the terror of Europe, have sunk into debility. How have these discoveries produced such reverses of fortune ? Why are not those nations, to whom nature has been most liberal, still the richest and most flourishing ? To throw light on these important topics, we must take a retrospective view of the state of Europe before these discoveries were made ; we must trace circumstantially the events to which they have given birth, and conclude with examining the present condition of the different European powers.

Commercial states have civilized all others *. The
Phoenicians,

* It is but a very little time since Europe was in a state of nature. In many respects she is still uncivilized ; and, were it not for the great commercial intercourse men have with one another, she would remain forever so. It was the commerce of the Egyptians and Tyrians that civilized the Greeks ; and they, by improving all the sciences and all the arts which they had received from their neighbours, elevated human reason to the very summit of perfection, but which the ruin of commerce, and the revolutions of Empires, afterwards depressed. Their admirable institutions were greatly superior to any we have an idea of at present ; nor is there any nation, if we except the Chinese, which has made so great progress as the Greeks in that branch of philosophy which respects government and manners. Their military discipline is even preferable to that of the Romans themselves. The principles upon which they founded their colonies does honour as well to their understanding as to their humanity. They carried all the fine arts to a degree of perfection greatly beyond what any other nation had done, and they had just ideas of beauty and excellence of every kind.

Phœnicians, extremely limited both in extent of country and influence, acquired, by their genius for navigation, an importance which ranked them foremost in the history of ancient nations. They are mentioned by writers of every class: They were known to the most distant climes; and their fame has been transmitted to succeeding ages. Situated on a barren coast, separated from the land by the Mediterranean on one side, and the mountains of Libanus on the other, they seem to have been destined by nature for the dominion of the sea. Fishing taught them the art of navigation; the murex furnished them with the purple dye; the sands of the shore led them to discover the art of making glass. Happy nation! Nature gave you little, that she might the more effectually excite genius and industry, which are the mother of arts and the source of riches.

It must be confessed, that the situation of the Phœnicians was very favourable to extensive commerce. By inhabiting the confines of Africa, Asia, and Europe, if they could not unite the inhabitants of the globe, they at least had it in their power, by a commercial intercourse, to communicate to every nation the productions of all climates. But the ancients, though they have taught us much useful knowledge, have often been excelled by us; and they had not sufficient resources to enable them to carry on an universal commerce. The Phœnicians had no shipping except galleys; they only carried on a coasting trade, and their navigation was confined to the Mediterranean. Tho' this state was the model upon which other maritime powers were formed, we know better what they have done than what they might have performed. We may judge of their population by their colonies, which it is said extended all along the borders of the Mediterranean, and particularly on the coasts of Africa.

Tyre, or Sidon, the queen of the ocean, gave birth to Carthage. The opulence of Tyre invited tyrants to rivet its fetters; but Carthage, the offspring of Tyre, notwithstanding its riches, was happy in the enjoyment of liberty. It commanded the coasts of Africa, and had possession of Spain, the richest country in Europe, and then famous for its own gold and silver

mines, though destined, at the expence of much bloodshed, to acquire others in a new world.

If the Roman power had never existed, Carthage would probably have been nothing more than a commercial state; but the ambition of one nation excited all the rest to relinquish the arts of peace, and either to conquer or to perish. Carthage, after a long and glorious contest for the empire of the world, was forced to yield to the all-subduing genius of Rome. The subversion of a republic, which gloried in industry, and owed its power to skill in useful arts, was a misfortune to Europe, and perhaps to the world in general.

Greece, intersected on all sides by seas, necessarily behoved to flourish in trade. Its situation in the Archipelago, and its separation from the large continent, seemed equally to prevent its making conquests, or its being overpowered by a foreign enemy. Placed between Asia and Europe, it contributed to civilize both, and enjoyed a prosperity which its services merited. As almost all the Greeks came either from Egypt or from Phœnicia, they brought along with them their knowledge and their industry; but of all the Asiatic colonies, those were the most prosperous and happy who had turned their attention to trade.

Africa employed her first ships for trafficking with Asia, or for planting as many colonies as Greece in her infancy could establish and preserve; but these emigrations involved them in wars. The Persians, accustomed to despotism, would not permit any free people to settle even on the confines of the sea; and the governors of provinces flattered their sovereign with the doctrine of universal slavery. This was the source of all the wars in Asia Minor, where the Athenians made as many allies or subjects as there were insular and maritime states. Athens enlarged her commerce by her victories, and her power by her commerce. All the arts sprang up in Greece along with the luxury of Asia.

Commerce, agriculture, and the means of population, were introduced into Sicily by the Greeks and the Carthaginians. Rome, who beheld their progress
with

with a jealous eye, made herself master of an island which supplied Sicily with many necessaries of life; and, having driven out the two nations that contended for the sovereignty of it, attacked first one, and then the other. From the moment that Carthage was destroyed, Greece trembled: But it was Alexander who opened the way for the Romans; nor was it possible, perhaps, that the Greeks could have been subdued by a foreign power, if they had not first conquered themselves. Commerce is finally destroyed by the riches it accumulates, as power is by its own conquests; and, when the commerce of the Greeks failed in the Mediterranean, it no longer subsisted in any part of the world.

The Greeks, by improving upon all the sciences and arts they have received from the Egyptians and Tyrians, elevated human reason to a high degree of perfection; but it was again reduced so low by subsequent revolutions, that it in all probability it will never rise to the same standard. Their institutions and laws were superior to the best we have had at this day. The principles upon which they founded their colonies do honour to their humanity. Though the arts owed to them their rise and perfection, they survived not the fate of their protectors: It is evident from some works of Xenophon, that they were better acquainted with the principles of trade than most modern nations.

If we consider that Europe has had the advantage of all the knowledge of the Greeks; that her commerce is infinitely more extensive; that, since the improvements in navigation, our ideas are directed to greater, and more various objects; it is astonishing that we should not exhibit the most palpable superiority over them. But it must be observed, that when these people acquired a knowledge in arts and in trade, they were just sprung from the hands of Nature, and possessed all the powers necessary to improve the talents she had given them: But the Europeans had the misfortune to have their minds cramped by laws, by government, and by an exclusive and imperious religion*.

In

* The Author means here, the Romish religion. By this passage.

In Greece, commerce met with men; in Europe, with slaves. Whenever we discovered the absurdities of our institutions, we have endeavoured to correct them, without ever daring to overthrow the edifice. We have remedied some abuses, by introducing others; and, in our efforts to support, reform, and to palliate, we have adopted into our manners more contradictions and absurdities than are to be found in the most barbarous nations. Hence, if the arts should ever gain admission among the Tartars, and Iroquois, they will make an infinitely more rapid progress among them, than they can ever do in Russia and Poland.

The Romans, formed for conquest, dazzled the world with an appearance of grandeur; but they fell short of the Greeks in philosophy and the arts. They promoted an intercourse between different nations, not by uniting them by the ties of commerce, but by subjecting them to the same yoke. They ravaged the globe; but when reduced to subjection, they left it in a state of lethargic inactivity. Their despotism and military government oppressed the people, extinguished the powers of genius, and degraded the human race.

Every thing was thrown into still greater confusion by two laws of Constantine, which Montesquieu, however, has not ventured to enumerate among the causes of the declension of the empire. The first, dictated by imprudence and fanaticism, though it appeared to be the effect of humanity, serves to demonstrate, that great innovations are often attended with great danger, and that the original rights of mankind cannot always be made a principle of government. This law proclaimed liberty to all slaves who should embrace Christianity. It reinstated, in their original rights, men who hitherto had depended for an existence on the will of others; and, by depriving the proprietors of large tracts of land, of the number of hands requisite for their improvement, not only reduced them to the extremest indigence, but greatly weakened the state. On the

sage, and many others, the Abbé, though himself an ecclesiastic, appears to be no bigot to the Catholic faith. T.

the other hand, the new converts, having no property themselves, nor any certain means of subsistence, were not in a condition to assist the state, by repairing the injury their liberty had done to their former masters. It was equally impossible that they could have any attachment to a state which did not afford them subsistence, or to a religion which the irresistible desire of liberty alone induced them to embrace. By another edict, paganism was prohibited throughout the empire; and thus these extensive dominions were inhabited by men, whose attachment to each other, and to the state, was no longer secured by the solemn functions of religion: having no priests, no temples, no public morals, they had no motives to repel any enemy that might attack a government with which they were no longer connected.

The inhabitants of the North, therefore, when they attacked the empire, found every thing ready to favour their designs. Harrassed in Poland and in Germany, by some nations who had migrated from Great Tartary, they took a temporary possession of certain ruined provinces, and were again expelled by succeeding conquerors of a still more ferocious disposition. When these barbarians determined to settle in the regions they had laid waste, they created divisions in countries which the Romans had formerly united. From that moment, all communication between those states which had been established by accident, necessity, or caprice, was at an end. The swarms of pirates that infested the seas, together with the fierce disposition of the inhabitants of the frontiers, discouraged every connection that mutual convenience might render necessary. The subjects of each state, however small in extent, were separated from each other by insurmountable obstacles. The banditti who infested the roads, made a moderate journey a dangerous expedition. The nations of Europe, thus plunged a second time, by slavery and despair, into that insensibility and indolence which must for many ages have been the state of the human race, reaped little advantage from the fertility of their soil; their industry was not superior to that of savages: tracts of country, at no great distance,

distance, were to them of as little importance as if they had not existed; nor had they any further knowledge of their neighbours, than as they excited their fears, or their enmity.

The relations of some authors concerning the wealth and splendour of the seventh century are as fabulous as the other miraculous feats recorded by the historians of that æra. Their cloathing was of skia and coarse woolen: the conveniencies of life were not known. Buildings were erected with strength and solidity; but they conveyed no idea of affluence, or of taste. It required neither much money, nor much knowledge, to pile up heaps of stone by the hands of slaves. One incontestible proof of the indigence of the people was, that taxes were levied in kind; and that even the contributions which the inferior clergy paid to their superiors consisted of provisions.

The superstition that prevailed increased the general darkness. By means of sophisms and subtilties, it laid the foundation of that false science called *Theology*, in which men busied themselves at the expence of real knowledge. In the eighth, and the beginning of the ninth century, Rome, no longer the capital of the universe, attempted to exercise her authority as formerly, in deposing and making kings. Without inhabitants, without soldiers, by dint of opinions and religious tenets alone, she aspired to universal monarchy. By her address, princes were excited to take up arms against each other, people against their kings, and kings against their people. All merit consisted in making war, and all virtue in obeying the church. The dignity of monarchs was degraded by the usurpations of Rome, which inspired a contempt for princes, without exciting the love of liberty. A few absurd romances, and some melancholy tales, the offspring of cloistered indolence, composed the literature of these ages. These miserable compositions contributed to cherish that dejection of spirit, and that propensity to the marvellous, which are favourable to the interests of superstition.

Two other nations again changed the face of the globe. A people from Scandinavia and the Cimbrian
Chersonesus

Cherfonefus spread themselves over the North of Europe, while the Southern nations were harrassed by the Arabs. The former were disciples of Wodin, the latter of Mōhammed; men who had equally diffused the fanaticism of conquest with that of religion. Charlemagne subdued one of these nations, and maintained his ground against the other. These inhabitants of the North, called Saxons, or Normans, were indigent, ill armed, and undisciplined; of savage manners, and pushed on to war and death by misery and superstition. Charlemagne, desirous of compelling them to change that religion which rendered them so ungovernable, and to adopt another which would dispose them to obedience, was obliged to wade through seas of blood, and the cross was erected on heaps of the slain. He was less successful against the Arabs, who had conquered Asia, Africa, and Spain; and he could gain no footing beyond the Pyrenean mountains.

The necessity of repulsing the Arabs and Normans occasioned the revival of naval skill in Europe. Charlemagne in France, Alfred the Great in England*, and some cities of Italy, built ships; and these first attempts towards navigation revived a kind of maritime commerce. Charlemagne established great fairs, the principal of which was at Aix-la-Chapelle. This is the method of increasing commerce among a people, where it is still in its infancy.

The Arabs, however, laid a foundation for the most extensive commerce that had been known since that established at Carthage and Athens. It is true, this was not so much owing to the lights of cultivated reason, and to the progress of good government, as to the extent of their power, and the nature of the country they possessed. Masters of Spain, of Africa, of Asia Minor, of Persia, and part of India, they introduced reciprocal exchange of commodities from one region to another. They extended gradually as far as the

* Our Author seems here to have mistaken chronology. Charlemagne began his reign in the year 771, and died in the year 814; whereas Alfred did not begin his till a complete century after, viz. in 871, and died in the 900. T.

the Moluccas and China; sometimes in the character of traders, sometimes as missionaries, and frequently as conquerors.

Soon after this, the Venetians, Genoese, and the Arabs of Barcelona, went to Alexandria, bought up the merchandise of Africa and India, and disposed of it in Europe. The Arabs, enriched by commerce, and satiated with conquest, were very different men from those who burnt the Alexandrian library. They cultivated the arts and polite literature, and were distinguished from other conquering nations by their improvements in reasoning and industry. To them we owe the sciences of algebra and chymistry, and of many new discoveries in astronomy, in mechanics, and in medicine, which were unknown to the ancients. But, of the fine arts, poetry is the only one that they have cultivated with success.

Mean time, the subjects of the Greek empire imitated the manufactures of Asia; and had, through various channels, monopolized the riches of India. But the advantages they derived from sources of wealth survived not the fate of their empire, which had nothing to oppose to the heroic and daring enthusiasm of the Arabs, but the weak and unmanly weapons of scholastic logic, and the controversial armour of monks, who had by that time so fascinated the minds of men, that the Emperor used to ask pardon of God for the time he employed in affairs of state. Painting and sculpture were no longer known, and it was matter of perpetual dispute, whether images ought to be worshipped. The Greeks, though surrounded by the ocean, and in possession of many islands, had yet no maritime forces. They defended themselves, by wild fire *, against the naval

* As some readers may not understand what the Abbé here means by the Greeks defending themselves with *wild fire*, the following will serve as an account of it:

Callinicus, an architect who came from Syria to Constantinople, invented an artificial flame, which was easily ventilated into a point by means of a tube, and was of such a peculiar nature, that water, and every other substance which extinguish other fire, did but increase the violence of this. The Greeks were in possession of it for several years, and managed it in such a manner as made it capable of firing their enemies ships, particularly the Arabian fleet, which sailed

naval power of Egypt, and of the Saracens; a species of defence which is never employed but by a weak and degenerate people. Constantinople, not being in a condition to protect her maritime trade, resigned it to the Genoese, who seized upon Caffa, which they soon made a flourishing city.

The nobility of Europe, in their foolish expeditions, called Crusades, became tinctured with the manners of the Greeks and Arabs. They learned their arts and their luxury; which afterwards became necessary to their happiness. The Venetians had a most extensive demand for the goods they brought from the East; and the Arabs themselves carried some articles into France, England, and even into Germany.

These powers had, at that period, neither shipping nor manufactures; they laid restraints upon commerce; and a merchant was a term of reproach. This useful set of men were never respected among the Romans. They treated their merchants almost with the same contempt as their players, courtesans, bastards, slaves, and gladiators. The political system, established throughout Europe by the power and ignorance of the northern nations, must necessarily have confirmed a prejudice which originated from barbarity and pride. Our ancestors had the absurdity to adopt, as the basis of their government, a principle destructive of society, a contempt for all useful labour. The only persons held in any degree of estimation were the lords of manors, or such as had distinguished themselves in battle. The nobles were so many petty sovereigns, who abused their own power, and opposed that of the monarch. The barons were fond of parade, avaricious, whimsical, and poor.

ailed from Africa, or the Syrian coasts, to invade them even in Constantinople.

This flame was ranked among the secrets of state; and Constantine Porphyrogenitus, in his treatise on the administration of the Empire, which he dedicated to his son Romanus, advises him to tell the Barbarians, when they should desire him to give them any of the Grecian fire, that he was not permitted to part with it; because an angel, who presented it to the Emperor Constantine, commanded him to refuse it to all other nations, and that those who had disobeyed that injunction were consumed by a fire from heaven the moment they entered into the church.

poor. Sometimes they invited the merchants to their little states, and, at others, they extorted money from them. It was in these barbarous times that toll-duties, duties of export and import, of passage, of quarters, of escheat, and other numberless oppressions, were established. All the bridges and high-ways were opened or stopped up at the will of the prince or his vassals. The first elements of commerce were so totally unknown, that it was customary to fix the price of goods. The merchants were often pillaged, and always ill paid by the knights and barons. Trade was carried on in caravans, which went armed to the places where the fairs were kept. At these marts the merchants omitted nothing that might engage the favour of the people. They were generally accompanied by jugglers, musicians, and buffoons. As there were then no large towns, and neither public spectacles and meetings, nor the sedentary pleasures of private society, the time of fair was the season for diversions, which degenerating into dissoluteness, gave a sanction to the invectives and severities of the clergy. The traders were frequently excommunicated. The people held those strangers in abhorrence, who supplied their tyrants with superfluities, and associated with men whose manners were so repugnant to their prejudices and rude austerity of life. The Jews, who soon engaged in all branches of commerce, did not bring it into repute. They were then considered in the same light throughout all Europe as they are at this day in Poland and Turkey. As their fortunes increased every day, they were enabled to advance money to merchants and tradesmen; for which they demanded interest equivalent to their risk in vesting their capital in other hands. The schoolmen were violent in opposing this necessary measure, which their rude prejudices had taught them to condemn. This theological determination of a point of a civil and political nature, was attended with strange consequences. The magistrates, blinded by an authority which they durst not oppose, denounced sentence of confiscation and ignominious penalties against usury, which, in those dark ages, the laws did not distinguish from the most moderate interest. It was at this juncture that
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the Jews, to make themselves amends for the dangers and mortifications they were constantly exposed to, in carrying on a commerce which was looked upon as odious and unlawful, abandoned themselves to the most excessive rapacity. They were held in universal detestation. Persecuted, pillaged, and proscribed, they invented bills of exchange, which secured the remains of their fortunes. The clergy declared the exchange unfuriose; but it was of too great utility to be abolished. One of the effects it produced was to make the merchants more independent of the prince, who treated them better, lest they should transport their riches into foreign countries*.

The Italians, who are better known by the name of Lombards, were the first who took advantage of this early change of ideas. They formed small communities, and procured the protection of some states, who, on their account, dispensed with the laws against strangers, which had been made in the barbarous ages. By virtue of this indulgence, they became agents for all the southern parts of Europe.

The inhabitants of the North began likewise to awake from their lethargy: but their recovery was later, and effected with greater difficulty. Hamburgh and Lubec, having attempted to open a trade in the Baltic, were obliged to unite for their mutual defence against the pirates who infested those latitudes. The success of this little combination determined other towns to enter into a confederacy; which, in a short time, was composed of fourscore cities, and which had either obtained or purchased the privilege of being governed by their own laws, and they formed a line of communication from the Baltic to the Rhine. This association, which was the first of modern ones that adopted a regular system of commerce, bartered with the Lombards, naval stores, and other merchandise of the North, for

* Vanity gave some spur to industry in the fourteenth century; and the custom of wearing their coats of arms upon their clothes gave rise to a considerable improvement in their manufactures, as woolen cloth, interwoven with coats of arms, was a species of luxury which could not be procured from foreign parts.

for the produce of Asia, Italy, and the other southern countries.

Flanders was the scene of these happy transactions; but it was not to its situation alone that it owed a distinction so favourable to its interests: this must likewise be attributed to its numerous manufactures of fine cloth, and particularly that of tapestry; which last affords a convincing proof how little the arts of drawing and perspective were then known. All these advantageous circumstances conspired to make the Low-Countries the richest, the most populous, and the best cultivated part of Europe.

The flourishing condition of the inhabitants of Flanders, the Hanse Towns, and some republics, who owed their prosperity to their freedom, attracted the attention of most of the reigning monarchs. In their dominions the rights of citizens had hitherto been confined to the nobility and clergy; the rest of their subjects were slaves: But as soon as the cities were declared free, and had large immunities granted them, the merchants and mechanics entered into associations, which rose in estimation as they acquired riches. The sovereigns opposed their power to that of the barons. Thus anarchy and feudal tyranny gradually decreased. The tradesmen became citizens, and the third state was re-instated in its privilege of being admitted to the national assembly.

Montesquieu attributes to Christianity the honour of having abolished slavery; but we venture to differ from him. When industry and riches prevailed among the people, the princes began to hold them in some estimation; when the sovereign could avail himself of their riches, to gain advantages over the barons, laws were framed to put them in a better condition. It was to that sound policy, which commerce always introduces, and not to the spirit of the Christian religion, that kings were induced to bestow freedom upon the slaves of their vassals, because those slaves, when made free, became subjects. It is true, Pope Alexander III. declared that Christians were to be exempted from servitude; but this declaration was made merely to please the kings of France and England, who were desirous of humbling their vassals.

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The Christian religion * is so complaisant to slavery, that, in the catholic provinces of Flanders, in Bohemia, and in Poland, the people are still slaves: And even the possessors of church-lands, as was the case with us in the days of our forefathers, enjoy revenues from the labours of servitude; but this circumstance offends not the church †.

In Italy, one might perceive the dawning of more prosperous days. The republics of Pisa, Genoa, and Florence, were established on the wisest principles: the factions of the Guelphs and Gibbelines, which had for so many ages laid waste these delightful countries, were at length appeased; trade flourished, and consequently learning would soon be introduced. Venice was in the height of its glory; its navy, which eclipsed that of its neighbours, checked the progress of the maritime powers of the Mamelucs and the Turks. In commerce it was superior to the whole European states; its inhabitants were numerous, and its riches immense; the revenues were well managed, and the people were content; the republic borrowed money of the richer subjects, from motives, not of necessity, but of policy. The Venetians were the first people who found out the secret

* The Author here evidently means the Popish religion. T.

† Some citizens, such as Jacques Coeur, did more to make the third state respected than all the declarations of the Popes. Jacques Coeur would have established a lucrative and solid trade in France, had he been properly supported by government against the envy of courtiers, and the folly of his fellow-citizens. He was owner of a very great number of ships; and had more than three hundred factors, by whose means he carried on a most extensive trade in Turkey, Persia, Africa, Italy, and the north. He was the richest individual in the universe, and the most useful to his country, who would not have got the better of the English without the assistance which he gave so liberally to Charles VII. Crimes were laid to the charge of this great man, but not one was proved. Under the pretence, however, of his having made a present to the Sultan of Babylon of a horse's harness, and delivering up to the Saracens a criminal whom they had sought back, they scrupled not to confiscate his effects, and to send him into exile. But his factors having raised for him some new funds, he retired with the little he got to the island of Cyprus, where he again acquired a great fortune; and his retiring to this island, at that time in possession of the Venetians, was of singular advantage to that republic, who had been alarmed at the extent of his trade.

secret of attaching rich individuals to the interests of government, by inviting them to vest some part of their fortune in the public funds. At Venice, manufactures of silk, gold and silver, were carried on. It supplied foreigners with ships: their works in gold and silver were the best, and almost the only ones of that time. The inhabitants were even accused of extravagance in having gold and silver plate, and other utensils of the same materials. They were not, however, without sumptuary laws; but these laws laid no restraint on a species of luxury by which the sums expended were confirmed in the state. The noblemen united æconomy with splendor; the opulence of Venice had revived the architecture of Athens; and there was magnificence as well as elegance in their luxury; the people were ignorant, but the nobles were enlightened; the government opposed the attempts of the Popes with firmness and prudence: *Siamo Veneziani, poi Christiani*; "We are Venetians, not Christians," said one of their senators, who expressed in these words the sense of the whole senate; at that time they debased the priesthood, instead of making it useful to morality; which, however, was more rigid and pure among the Venetians, than among the other Italians. Their troops were very different from those miserable *Condottieri*, whose name was more terrible than their arms. Venice was the seat of politeness; and society was then under less restraint from the spies of government, than it has been since the republic began to be jealous of the power of its neighbours, and to be diffident of its own industry.

In the fifteenth century, Italy far surpassed the other states of Europe. Religious zeal, which supplied the place of merit, and occasioned so many trifling ceremonies and cruel oppressions, was, however, the means of releasing Spain from the Arabian yoke; several provinces of Spain had lately been united by the marriage of Ferdinand and Isabella, and the conquest of Granada; and its power was even equal to that of France. The fine wool of Castile and Leon was manufactured at Segovia, and their cloths were sold all over Europe, and even in Asia. The perpetual efforts
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the Spaniards were obliged to make to preserve their liberty, inspired them with resolution and with confidence. Their success had elevated their minds; and, being ignorant, they abandoned themselves to all the enthusiasm of chivalry and religion. Confined to a peninsula, and having no immediate commerce with other nations, they entertained that contempt for them, which, either among individuals or communities, is usually the characteristic of ignorance. They were the only people who maintained a standing body of infantry; and their infantry were excellent. As the Spaniards, for many ages, had been involved in war, their soldiery were of course the best disciplined troops in Europe.

The Portuguese had much the same character; but their monarchy was better regulated than that of Castile, and the administration was conducted with more ease after the reduction of the Moors by the conquest of Algarva.

In France, Lewis the XI. had just lowered the power of the great vassals, raised that of the magistracy, and made the nobles subject to the laws. The people of France growing less dependent on their lords, must necessarily become, in a short time, more industrious, more active, and more respectable; but industry and commerce could not flourish all at once. The progress of reason must have been slow in the midst of those commotions, which were still excited by the great, and under the reign of a prince devoted to the most despicable superstition. The barons were distinguished only by their savage haughtiness; their revenues were scarce sufficient to entertain a train of gentlemen without employment, who defended them against the sovereign and the laws. The expences of their table were immoderate; and this savage luxury, of which there are still too many remains, afforded no encouragement to any of the useful arts. But neither the manners nor the language of those times partook of that decency which distinguishes the superior ranks of citizens, and procures them respect from the others. Notwithstanding the courtesy enjoined to the knights, coarse and rough manners still prevailed among the

great. The nation had then the same character of inconsistency it has since preserved; and which every nation will have whose morals and customs are not conformable to the laws. The prince's councils issued innumerable, and frequently contradictory edicts; but the prince readily dispensed with the observance of them. By this easy disposition of the sovereign, the inconveniencies which would have arisen from a multitude of laws inconsiderately made by the French ministry, have been happily prevented.

England, less opulent, and less industrious than France, was composed of insolent barons, despotic bishops, and a people who were tired of their yoke; a certain restless disposition prevailed in the nation, which must necessarily, sooner or later, have introduced liberty. This character owed its rise to the absurd tyranny of William the Conqueror, and the cruel temper of several of his successors. The intolerable abuse of power had made the English extremely jealous of their sovereigns; the very name of King was pronounced among them with horror; and these sentiments, transmitted from father to son, afterwards laid the foundations of that form of government they now have the happiness to enjoy. The long contention between the houses of York and Lancaster, while it raised a martial spirit and an impatience of slavery, involved the nation, at the same time, in poverty and confusion. The English wool was at that time manufactured in Flanders, and was exported, as well as its lead and tin, in vessels belonging to the Hanse Towns. The principles of navigation, of internal policy, jurisprudence, luxury, and the fine arts, were entirely unknown in England; while, at the same time, it was oppressed with a multitude of rich convents and hospitals. The distressed nobles went from convent to convent, and the common people from hospital to hospital. These useless and superstitious institutions cherished idleness and barbarity of manners.

Germany, which had long been harrassed by quarrels between the Emperors and the Popes, and by intestine wars, had at this time begun to enjoy a state of tranquillity; order had taken place of anarchy, and the

the inhabitants of this extensive country, who, though strangers to wealth and commerce, were versed in the arts of war and agriculture, had nothing to fear from their neighbours; neither could they be formidable to them. The feudal system, so fatal to mankind in other countries, here assumed a milder aspect; the princes presiding over this vast extent of territory, generally governed their respective states with a tolerable share of moderation. They seldom abused their authority, and, if the peaceable possession of their estates could compensate the want of liberty, the Germans were happy. Commerce and industry were entirely confined to the free cities, and to the towns included in the Hanseatic league. The mines of Hanover and Saxony were not yet discovered. Silver was scarce; the farmer sold a few horses to strangers, nor had the princes yet introduced the traffic of the human species; the expences of the table, and a variety of equipages, were the only articles of luxury; the nobles and the clergy intoxicated themselves, without disturbing the government; it was with some difficulty that the gentry were dissuaded from amusing themselves with robbing on the highways; their manners were savage, and, during the two succeeding centuries, the German troops were more distinguished by their cruelties than by their discipline and bravery.

The northern countries had made less progress than Germany. Oppressed by the nobles and priests, the inhabitants no longer retained that enthusiastic love of glory with which the religion of Wodin had formerly inspired them; nor were they yet acquainted with those wise institutions which some of them have since borrowed from better forms of government. Their power was so inconsiderable, that a single Hanse town was capable of intimidating the three potentates of the North. After the Reformation, however, and under the auspices of Frederic and Gustavus Vasa, they began to make some figure in Europe*.

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* The age, wherein many remarkable revolutions were to take place, now advanced with hasty steps. Mankind were desirous to acquire new light, and the full enjoyment of liberty; but this was accomplished at the expence of many wars, and much bloodshed.

The Turks were strangers to the science of government; they had no knowledge of the arts, nor taste for commerce: but the Janissaries were the best people in the world. These attendants of a despot, whom they kept in awe and dreaded the same time, whom they placed upon the throne, or strangled at pleasure, had at that time some great men for their leaders. They subverted the empire of the Greeks, who were infatuated with theology, and stupified by superstition. Some of the inhabitants of this mild climate, who cultivated literature and the arts, abandoned their country after it was subdued, and took refuge in Italy; whither they were followed by artists and traders. Tranquillity, peace, prosperity, a desire of excelling, and the want of new pleasures, which is the effect of good governments, favoured the revival of letters in the country of the ancient Romans; and it was from the Greeks that the Italians derived a better knowledge of good models, and a taste for antiquity. The art of printing was invented; and tho' for a long time the discovery was of little use while the people continued in a state of poverty and indolence, yet when commerce and the arts had made some progress, it made books become common. A love of study prevailed, and the ancients were universally admired: but they had no rivals, except in Italy.

Rome, which in every century has almost always assumed a character the best adapted to the present moment, seemed disposed no more to encourage that ignorance which had so long been subservient to her interests. She protected polite literature, and such of the arts as depended more on imagination than reason. The most ignorant priest is well aware, that representations of a terrible divinity, mortification, self-denial, austerity, melancholy and terror, are so many expedients to gain an ascendant over the minds of men, by engaging them deeply in religious matters. But there are times when these expedients have but little success. Men, who have grown rich in peaceful states, are fond of enjoying themselves; they dislike the dull road of life, and are eager in their pursuit of pleasures. When fairs began to be established, with entertainments of sports,

sports, dancing, and other recreations, the clergy, who observed that the love of festivity made the people less religious, prohibited these sports, and excommunicated those who bore a part in them. But when they found that no regard was paid to their censures, they changed their plan, and determined to take those amusements into their own hands. This was the origin of sacred comedy. The death of St Catharine, acted by the monks of St Dennis, rivalled the success of the players. Music was introduced into the churches; and even farces were exhibited there. The festivals called *la Fete des foux & de L'Ane, & des Innocens*, which were celebrated in their churches, proved as entertaining to the people as the farces that were acted in the public places. It often happened, that, attracted by the mere love of amusement, they left the Egyptian dances to join in the procession for the festival of St John. As Italy improved in politeness, their pleasures became more refined; and the decency that was introduced into their common feasts and public entertainments, afforded less pretence for the censures of the priests, and procured them a toleration. The merit of being able to read had been long confined to this class of men; but when it became a more general accomplishment, they could no longer avail themselves of this distinction: and finding that learning was the road to fame, they were ambitious of shining in literary pursuits. The Popes, who enjoyed an opulent and peaceful sovereignty in the voluptuous region of Italy, laid aside their austerity. Their court became agreeable. The encouragement of literature was considered as a new expedient to establish their authority over the minds of men. Genius was cherished; and marks of honour were conferred upon great artists. Raphael was on the point of being created a Cardinal when he died; and Petrarch had the honours of a triumph. As little conformable as this good taste, these fine arts, and new amusements, may appear to the spirit of the gospel, they were evidently calculated to promote the interest of the papal throne. The belles lettres serve to embellish the structure of the church; but philosophy demolishes it. Thus, while the church of Rome favoured polite literature,

ature, and the fine arts, it discountenanced the severer sciences. The poets were crowned with laurel; but the philosophers were prosecuted. Galileo from his prison might have beheld Tasso carried in triumph to the capitol, if those men of great genius had been cotemporaries.

It was high time that philosophy and learning should lend their support to morality and reason. The church of Rome did all she could to subvert those principles of justice which nature had implanted in all mankind. The single maxim, that the Pope had a right to the sovereignty of all empires, sapped the foundation of all society and public virtue: this maxim, however, had for a long time prevailed, together with that horrid doctrine, which not only permitted, but enjoined hatred and persecution towards all whose religious opinions were not conformable to those of the Romish church. Indulgencies, a species of expiation which might be purchased for all crimes, or if any thing can be still more monstrous, for crimes to be committed in future; dispensations for breaking faith with the enemies of the Pontiff, though they were of the same religion; that article of belief which teaches, that the merit of the just may be transferred to the wicked; vices of all kinds exemplified in the lives of the Popes, and other religious persons, who ought to be models to the people; above all, that greatest reproach to humanity, the Inquisition: all these horrid enormities made Europe appear to be rather the haunt of tygers and serpents, than a vast country inhabited or cultivated by men.

Such was the situation of Europe, when the Portuguese monarch, at the head of an active, generous, and intelligent people, surrounded by neighbours who still preyed upon each other, formed the plan of extending his dominion by sea and land.

JOHN I. had several sons, who, being ambitious of signalizing themselves, undertook, first of all, some expeditions to Barbary. Henry, whose genius was superior to the rest, took it into his head to make discoveries in the West. This

The first expeditions of the Portuguese; their arrival in the Indies.

young

young prince availed himself of the little knowledge of astronomy which was preserved among the Arabs. At Sagres, a city of Algarva, he established an observatory, and made it the place of education for all the nobility who composed his train: he had a considerable share in the invention of the Astrolabe, and was the first who was sensible of the advantages that might be drawn from the Compass, which, though already known in Europe, had never been applied to the purposes of navigation.

The pilots, who studied under his direction, discovered Madeira in the year 1418. Two years after this, one of his ships took possession of the Canaries; he doubled the Cape of Sierra-Leona, and the river Zara led him into the interior parts of Africa, as far as Congo. He made an easy conquest of those countries, and established an advantageous commerce. The petty nations who inhabited those parts, being separated from each other by impassable deserts, knew neither the value of their riches, nor the art of defending themselves. These voyages raised great expectations. The revenues, that might in future arise from the coast of Guinea, were farmed. An instance of avidity so premature, shows, that the princes, who undertook these discoveries, were more solicitous to increase their finances, than to promote the commerce of their subjects.

In the reign of John the Second, an intelligent prince, who first declared Lisbon a free port, and made a new application of astronomy to navigation, some Portuguese were sent out upon an expedition, and doubled the Cape at the extremity of Africa. This Cape was then called the Cape of Storms; but the prince, who foresaw that it would open a passage to the Indies, gave it the name of the Cape of Good Hope.

Emmanuel pursued the plan chalked out by his predecessors. In 1497 he equipped a fleet consisting of four ships, and gave the command of it to *Vasco de Gama*. This admiral, having weathered several storms in his cruise along the eastern coasts of Africa, and attempted seas before unknown, landed at length in Indostan, after a voyage of thirteen months.

ASIA,

A geographical description of Asia.

ASIA, of which Indostan is one of the richest parts, is a vast continent, lying, according to the observations of the Russians, the truth of which has been justly doubted, between the 43d and the 207th degree of longitude. It extends, between the two poles, from the 77th degree of northern, to the 10th degree of southern latitude. That part of this large continent which is situated in the temperate zone, between the 35th and the 50th degree of latitude, appears to be higher than the rest; it is bordered both towards the north and south by two vast chains of mountains, which run almost from the western extremity of Asia Minor and the coasts of the Black Sea, to the ocean that washes the coasts of China and Tartary towards the east. These two chains are united by other intermediate chains, in a direction from south to north; they stretch out both towards the northern, the Indian, and eastern oceans, and appear like so many bulwarks raised between the beds of the large rivers which roll thro' those immense regions.

Such is the great basis which nature has raised to support the fabric of Asia. In the inland parts of this vast country, the soil, parched by the heat of the sun, becomes so light, that it is carried about by the winds; there is not the least appearance either of stone or marble; no petrified shells, or other fossils, are to be found; the beds of minerals lye upon the surface. All these phenomena, joined to the observations made with the barometer, are proofs of the great elevation of the central part of Asia, to which the moderns have given the name of the Lesser Bucharina.

From these heights, which form a kind of girdle, surrounding this immense and unfruitful region, several large streams arise, that run in different channels. The fragments of barren earth, which are perpetually carried down by these rivers toward the several extremities of Asia, form so many barriers against the seas which threaten to overflow its coasts, and promise a stability and duration to this continent superior to that of any other. Perhaps it will be its fate to see the rest repeatedly buried under the waters, before it suffers any encroachment itself.

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The Caspian sea alone has preserved its station within the limits of this vast tract of land, which has been emerging from the deep through a series of ages. It may doubtless be considered as the reservoir of those large rivers that fall into it; but may likewise have some small communication, by subterraneous passages, with the ocean and the Mediterranean, if it be true, as it appears to be from observations made with the barometer at Astracan, that its surface is below the level of both those seas.

The Frozen ocean, which washes the northern coasts of Siberia, renders them inaccessible, if we may believe the accounts given by the Russians. They even pretend, that, after all the attempts which have been as yet made, it has been impossible to double the point of land betwixt the rivers Peasiga and Lamura, by reason of the immense quantity of ice which is constantly collected together there. They also affirm, that, although it might sometimes be possible to double the Cape of Schalaginikoi, the passage which separates these places from America is almost always shut up with ice. Hence they would conclude, that it was in vain to expect a proper passage to the South sea would ever be found by that course. Their accounts, however, are accompanied with several circumstances, which give ground to suspect, that there is some political reason which prevents them from publishing all that they know concerning these seas.

The sea which washes the southern parts of Asia, and which is called the Indian ocean, according to M. Buache, is divided from the great South sea by a chain of mountains under the water, beginning at the island of Madagascar, and continuing all the way to Sumatra, as is evident from the islands, the shallows, and the rocks, which are to be found throughout all that extent; and from thence it proceeds to join again at Van Diemen's Land and New Guinea. This learned gentleman, to whom natural philosophy is so much indebted, considers the sea that is contained between this chain and the south coasts of Asia as divided into three great basons, whose boundaries seem to have been assigned them by nature.

The first, which lyes towards the west, between Arabia and Persia, is bounded towards the south by that chain of islands which extends from Cape Comorin and the Maldiva Islands to Madagascar. This bason, which runs into the land, is incessantly enlarging the Gulph of Persia and the Red sea. The second of these basons forms the Gulph of Bengal. The third includes the great Archipelago, which contains the Sunda, the Moluccas, and the Philippine Islands. This joins Asia to the southern continent, and serves to balance that immense body of water contained in the Pacific ocean. Between this sea and the great Archipelago, a kind of new bason is formed by a chain of mountains under water towards the east, which extends from the Ladrones to the Japan Islands. When we have passed these celebrated islands, we come to a chain of islands called Kuriles, which touch the southern point of the Peninsula of Kamtschatka; and form a fifth bason, into which the river Amur empties itself; but as its entrance is obstructed by the bamboos, which grow there in great abundance, it is imagined that this sea has very little depth.

These geographical details, far from being foreign to our purpose, are in a manner necessary to direct and engage our attention to the richest and finest continent upon the globe *. We will begin with Indostan.

Natural history of Indostan.

THOUGH by the general name of the East Indies is commonly understood those immense regions which lye beyond the Arabian sea and the Persian empire; yet by Indostan is properly meant a country lying between two celebrated rivers, the Indus and the Ganges, which fall into the Indian ocean, at the distance of four hundred leagues from each other. A ridge of high mountains runs across this long tract from north to south, and, dividing it in the middle, extends as far

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* The Eastern ocean, which separates the Asiatic sea from that of America, is not sufficiently known to invite us to pursue further a description of that part of the world, where the richness of the soil, and the industry of the inhabitants, have at all times attracted so many people.

as Cape Comorin, where it forms the boundary between the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel.

It is a remarkable circumstance, and perhaps the only one of the kind, that this ridge seems to be a barrier, erected by nature, to separate one season from another. The mere breadth of these mountains divides summer from winter; that is to say, the season of fine weather from the rainy; for it is well known there is no winter between the tropics; all that is meant by winter in the Indies is that time of the year when the clouds, which the sun attracts from the sea, are driven violently by the winds against the mountains, where they break and dissolve in rain, accompanied with frequent storms. From hence torrents are formed, which rush from the hills, swell the rivers, and overflow the vallies: dark vapours, that obscure the day, spread a thick and impenetrable gloom over the deluged country; but, like the abyss which brooded over the principles of things before the creation, this cloudy season promotes fertility: at this time the plants and flowers appear in full strength and beauty, and the fruits in general come to maturity.

The summer may naturally be expected to preserve its usual temperature better than the winter, in a climate so immediately under the influence of the sun: the sky, without a cloud to intercept the rays of the sun, seems to be all on fire; but the sea-breezes which spring up in the day-time, and the land-breezes that blow during the night, alternately alleviate the heat of the atmosphere; yet the calms, that now and then intervene, stifle these refreshing gales, and the inhabitants are reduced to suffer the inconveniencies of excessive drought.

The effect of the two different seasons is still more remarkably felt in the two Indian oceans, where they are distinguished by the name of the dry and rainy monsoons. While the returning sun introduces with the spring nothing but storms and shipwrecks on the sea that washes the coasts of Malabar, the slightest vessels sail along the coast of Coromandel upon a smooth surface, and require neither skill nor precaution in their pilots; but in the autumn, which, in its turn,

changes the face of the elements, the western coast enjoys a perfect calm, while the eastern Indian ocean is tossed by tempests; each experiencing, as it were, the alternatives of peace and war. An inhabitant of the island of Ceylon, who contemplates the equatorial region at the two equinoxes, sees alternately, on the right hand, the waves vexed with storms, and, on the left, lulled into tranquillity; as if the Author of Nature, who holds the scales of calamities and blessings perpetually in his hands, had instantly turned the beam in equilibrium, from one side to the other. It is not improbable that the doctrine of the Manichees, concerning the two principles, might take its rise in India, where the two empires of good and evil are divided only by a partition of mountains; since pain and pleasure seem to be as much the origin of the different forms of worship, as they are of the ideas of mankind.

There is so strong a connection between natural and moral principles, that all systems of importance to the happiness of the human species have taken their colour from the nature of the climate: accordingly it is observable, that the Indians, on whose imaginations nature has made the deepest impressions by the most forcible operation of good and evil, and the view they constantly have of the discord of the elements, are placed in a situation most fertile in revolutions and extraordinary events.

Hence it is, that the celebrated countries of India have long engaged the attention of the philosopher and the historian, whose conjectures have assigned to their earliest inhabitants an æra of the most extraordinary antiquity. To say the truth, whether we consult historical records, or consider the position of Indostan upon the globe, and admitting the progressive motion of the sea from east to west, we must allow that this part of the earth was the first part that was inhabited. We may trace the origin of most of the sciences in the history of that country. Even before the age of Pythagoras, the Greeks travelled to India for instruction; the trade which the oldest commercial nations carried on with them for their cloth is a convincing

vincing proof of their great progress in the arts of industry.

Upon the whole, it should seem reasonable to conclude, that a climate, the best adapted to the human species, would be peopled the earliest; and that the first men would fix their abode in a delicious climate, pure air, and a soil too fertile to require much cultivation. If the human race could be supposed to multiply and extend themselves in those horrid regions, where they must maintain a perpetual struggle with nature; if they could inhabit burning sands and impracticable morasses, and regions of perpetual ice; or frequent deserts and forests, where they must defend themselves against the violence of the elements, and the attacks of wild beasts; how easily might they not form themselves into societies in these delightful countries, where mankind, exempt from necessity, has nothing to pursue but pleasure; where enjoying, without labour or anxiety, the choicest productions, and the most glorious prospect of the great scene of nature, they might justly assume the distinguishing title of Lords of the creation. These delightful scenes presented themselves on the banks of the Ganges, and in the plains of Indostan. The air is perfumed with the most delicious fruits, and affords a wholesome and refreshing nourishment; the trees form a shade impenetrable to the rays of the sun; while the living animals, that are dispersed over the globe, cannot subsist in other parts without devouring each other, they share in India, in common with their master, the sweets of plenty and security. Even at this day, when we may think that the earth must have been exhausted by the productions of so many ages, and their consumption in foreign countries, Indostan, if we except a few sandy and barren districts, is still the most fruitful country in the world.

The system of morals in this country is no less extraordinary than the system of nature. When we fix our eyes on this vast region, where nature hath exerted her utmost efforts for the happiness of man, we cannot but regret that man hath

Religion, government, and customs, of Indostan.

done all in his power to oppose her. The rage of conquest, and, what is no less destructive an evil, the greediness of traders, have, in their turns, ravaged and oppressed the finest country on the face of the globe.

Amidst the numbers of savage banditti, and other strangers, whom war or desire of gain has invited to the Indies, it is easy to distinguish the ancient inhabitants. There is not, however, so much difference in the cast of complexion and outward appearance of these people, as in the particularities of their character; oppressed as they have been with the yoke of tyranny, or rather of the wildest anarchy, they have neither adopted the manners, the laws, nor the religion of their masters. Their continual experience of all the horrors of war, all the excesses and vices of which human nature is capable, has not tainted their character. Nothing has ever been able to reconcile the tender, humane, and timorous Indian, to scenes of blood, or to animate him with the courage and spirit of rebellion. His vices are the mere effects of human weakness.

The judicious traveller, who, traversing the plains of Egypt, sees trunks of columns, mutilated statues, broken entablatures, and immense pyramids, that have escaped the ravages of war and time, dispersed thro' the country, is lost in admiration at the view of the ruins of a nation which no longer exists. He cannot now find out the situation of Thebes, that city so celebrated in antiquity for its hundred gates; but the venerable remains of its temples, and of its tombs, give him a higher idea of its magnificence, than the descriptions of Herodotus and Diodorus Siculus.

When we attentively examine the accounts given by travellers of the manners of the natives of India, we seem to wander among heaps of ruins, the remains of an immense fabric. The original form is lost, but enough is preserved to convince us of the magnificence and regularity of the plans. Amidst a variety of absurd superstitions, puerile and extravagant customs, strange ceremonies and prejudices, we may discover the traces of sublime morality, deep philosophy and refined policy; but when we attempt to trace the religious and civil institutions to their source, we find
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that they are lost in the maze of antiquity. By the most ancient traditions, the Indians appear to have been the first who received the rudiments of science, and the polish of civilization. But their legislative system has never been discovered; and it would appear that the ancients themselves had seen only some fragments of it.

In India are found the traces of a multitude of superstitions observances, arts, sports, errors and truths of all kinds, which have been adopted by almost all nations.

The Indians themselves are ignorant of the origin of their religion and policy: they have to this day preserved customs which must certainly have owed their rise to a system that no longer exists: the spirit of their political constitution is lost, and every branch of it either changed or corrupted. Their religion, which was of the allegorical and moral kind, hath degenerated into a heap of extravagant and obscene superstitions, owing to their having realized those fictions which were intended merely as so many symbols and emblems.

Were it possible to obtain a sight of their sacred books, the only monument that remains of the Indian antiquities, we might, in some measure, be enabled to remove the veil that envelopes these numerous mysteries; but we have little reason to hope that we shall ever be intrusted with such a communication.

The Emperor Mahmoud Akebar took it into his head to make himself acquainted with the principles of all the religious sects throughout his extensive provinces. Having discarded the superstitious notions with which he had been prepossessed by his education in the Mohammedan religion, he resolved to judge for himself. It was easy for him to be informed of the nature of those systems that are formed upon the plan of making proselytes; but he found himself disappointed in his design, when he came to treat with the Indians, who will not admit any person whatever to the participation of their mysteries.

Neither the authority nor promises of Akebar could prevail with the Bramins to disclose the tenets of their religion;

religion : he was therefore obliged to have recourse to artifice. The stratagem he made use of was, to cause an infant, of the name of Feizi, to be committed to the care of these priests, as a poor orphan of the sacerdotal line, who alone could be initiated into the sacred rites of their theology. Feizi, having received the proper instructions for the part he was to act, was conveyed privately to Benares, the seat of knowledge in Indostan ; he was received into the house of a learned Bramin, who educated him with the same care as if he had been his son. After the youth had spent ten years in study, Akebar was desirous of recalling him ; but he was struck with the charms of the daughter of his preceptor.

The women of the sacerdotal tribe are looked upon as the greatest beauties in Indostan. The old Bramin laid no restraint on the growing passion of the two lovers ; he was fond of Feizi, who had gained his affections by his address and docility, and offered him his daughter in marriage. The young man, divided between love and gratitude, resolved to conceal the fraud no longer ; and, falling at the feet of the Bramin, discovered the imposture, and asked pardon for his offence.

The priest, without reproaching him in the least, seized a poinard which hung at his girdle, and was going to plunge it in his breast, if Feizi had not prevented him by taking hold of his arm. The young man used every means to pacify him, and declared himself ready to do any thing to expiate his treachery. The Bramin, bursting into tears, promised to pardon him on condition that he should never translate the *Bedas*, or sacred volumes, or disclose to any person whatever the symbol of the Bramin creed. Feizi readily promised all that the Bramin required : how far he kept his word is not known ; but the sacred books of the Indians have never been translated by him, or any one else, to this day.

As the Bramins are the only persons who understand the language of the sacred book, their comments on the text are the same as those which have ever been made on religious books ; all the maxims which fancy,
interest,

interest, passion or false zeal can suggest, are to be found in these volumes. These exclusive pretensions of the interpreters of religion have given them that unbounded influence over the people, which impostors and fanatics will not fail to exert over men who have not the courage to consult either their own reason, or their own feelings.

From the Indus to the Ganges, the *Vedam* is universally received as the book that contains the principles of religion; but the generality differ on several points relative to faith and practice. That spirit of debate and refinement, which for so many ages has infected the philosophy of our schools, has made still farther progress among the Bramins, and caused more absurdities in their doctrines than it has introduced into ours, by a mixture of Platonism, which is perhaps itself derived from the doctrines of the Bramins.

Throughout all Indostan, the laws of government, customs, and manners, make a part of religion; being all derived from Brama, a being far superior in dignity to the human race, the interpreter of the divinity, the author of the sacred books, and the great lawgiver of India.

There is some reason to believe that Brama * was possessed of the sovereign authority; as his religious institutions were evidently designed to inspire the people with a profound reverence and great love for their country, and are particularly levelled against the vices incident to the climate. Few religions seem to have been so well adapted to the countries for which they were instituted.

The Indians entertain the same religious veneration for him, as they do for the three capital rivers of Indostan, the Indus, the Christina, and the Ganges. It was

* They consider him as the author of their sacred books, the original of which is lost; but there still remains a commentary upon them, wrote in a language which is understood only by a few of the Bramins. In this book they are commanded to believe in one Supreme Being, who has created different orders of beings, some superior, and others inferior to man. They are also commanded to believe in the immortality of the soul, in a state of rewards and punishments in another life, and in the transmigration of souls; and these are the first principles of their religion.

was he who rendered sacred the animal that is most serviceable in the cultivation of land, as well as the cow, whose milk is so wholesome a nourishment in hot countries. To him they ascribe the division of the people into tribes or *castes*, distinguished from each other by their political and religious principles. This institution is antecedent to all traditions and known records, and may be considered as the most striking proof of the great antiquity of the Indians. Nothing appears more contrary to the natural progress of society, than the distinction of ranks among the members of the same community. Such an idea could only be the result of a studied plan of legislation, which pre-supposes a great proficiency in civilization and knowledge. Another circumstance still more extraordinary is, that this distinction should continue so many ages, after the leading idea and connecting tie were forgotten; it affords us a remarkable example of the strength of national prejudices, when sanctified by religious notions.

The nation is divided into four classes, the Bramins, the soldiery, husbandmen, and mechanics: these classes have their subdivisions. There are several orders of Bramins: those who mix in society are, for the most part, very corrupt in their morals; they believe that the water of the Ganges will wash away all their crimes; and as they are not subject to any civil jurisdiction, live without either restraint or virtue, excepting that character of compassion and charity which is so commonly found in the mild climate of India.

The others who live obstructed from the world, are either weak-minded men or enthusiasts, and abandon themselves to laziness, superstition, and the dreams of metaphysics. We find in their disputes the very same ideas that occur in the writings of our most celebrated metaphysicians, such as, substance, accident, priority, posteriority, immutability, indivisibility, the vital and sensitive soul; but with this difference, that whereas in India these fine discoveries are very ancient, it is but a very short time since Peter Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, Leibnitz, and Mallebranche, astonished all Europe with their dexterity in raising their visionary systems. As
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this abstracted manner of reasoning was derived to us from the Greek philosophers, whose refinement we have gone far beyond, it is not improbable that the Greeks themselves might have borrowed this ridiculous knowledge from the Indians; unless we rather chuse to suppose, that as the principles of metaphysics lye open to the capacities of all nations, the indolence of the Bramins may have produced the same effect in India, as that of our monks has done in Europe; notwithstanding the inhabitants of one country had never communicated their doctrines to those of the other.

Such are the descendants of the ancient Brachmans, whom antiquity never speaks of but with admiration; because the affectation of austerity and mystery, and the privilege of declaring the will of Heaven, have imposed upon the vulgar in all ages. To them the Greeks ascribe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, certain notions concerning the nature of the Supreme Being, and of future rewards and punishments.

To this species of knowledge, which is the more flattering to the curiosity of man, in proportion as it transcends his weak capacity, the Brachmans added an infinite number of religious observances, which were adopted by Pythagoras in his school; such as fasting, prayer, silence, and contemplation; virtues of the imagination, which have a more powerful effect upon the vulgar than those of a useful and benevolent tendency. The Brachmans were looked upon as the friends of the gods, because they affected to pay them so much regard; and as the protectors of mankind, because they paid them no regard at all. No bounds were therefore set to the respect and gratitude that were shown them; princes themselves did not scruple to consult these recluses upon any critical conjuncture, from a supposition, no doubt, that they were inspired, since it was impossible to imagine that they had the advantages of experience. After all, we can hardly deny that there might be among them some men of real virtue, whose minds relished the pure and ingenious delights of study and science; and who, by nobly raising their thoughts to the contemplation of the First Being, had but the stronger reason to render themselves worthy of his care,
and

and none to justify them in deceiving and tyrannizing over their fellow-creatures.

The military class consists of the Rajas on the coast of Coromandel, and the Nairs on the coast of Malabar. There are likewise whole nations, the Canar and the Marattas for instance, who assume this profession, either because they are the descendants of some tribes originally devoted to arms, or because times and circumstances have introduced a change in their primitive institutions.

The third class consists entirely of husbandmen, and there are few countries where this set of men have a better title to the gratitude of their fellow-subjects; they are laborious and industrious, perfectly acquainted with the art of distributing their rivulets, and of making the burning soil they inhabit as fertile as possible. They are in India what they would be every where else, if not corrupted or oppressed by government, the most honest and virtuous of men. This class, which was formerly much respected, was free from tyranny, and the ravages of war; never were the husbandmen obliged to bear arms; their lands and their labours were held equally sacred; they ploughed their fields within view of contending armies, who suffered them to pursue their peaceful toil without molestation; their corn was never set on fire, nor their trees cut down; religion too, that all-powerful principle, lent her assistance to reason, which, though it inculcates, indeed, the propriety of protecting useful occupations, has not of itself sufficient influence to enforce the execution of its own laws.

The tribe of mechanics was branched out into as many classes as there are trades; no one was allowed to relinquish the profession of his parents; for which reason industry and vassalage have ever gone hand in hand, and carried the arts to as high perfection as they can possibly attain without the assistance of taste and imagination, which seldom unfold themselves but under the kind influences of emulation and liberty.

Besides these tribes, there is a fifth, which is the out-cast of all the rest; the members of it are employed in the meanest offices of society: they bury the dead, carry
away

away dirt, and live upon the flesh of animals that die natural deaths; they are held in such abhorrence, that if any of them dares to touch any person belonging to the other classes, he has a right to kill him on the spot: they are called *Parias*.

In Malabar there is another race of men called *Poulichees*, who suffer still greater injuries and hardships: they inhabit the forests; where they are not permitted to build huts, but are obliged to make a kind of nest upon the trees; when they are pressed with hunger, they howl like wild beasts to excite the compassion of the passengers. The most charitable among the Indians deposite some rice or other food at the foot of a tree, and retire with all possible haste, to give the famished wretch an opportunity of taking it without meeting with his benefactor, who would think himself polluted by coming near him.

The Europeans, by living with these unhappy people upon terms of common humanity, at length made themselves almost equally the objects of detestation among the Indians. This detestation prevails even to this day in the inland parts of the country, where the want of intercourse keeps alive those rooted prejudices, which wear off gradually near the sea-coasts, where the interests and mutual wants of commerce unite men with each other, and consequently introduce juster notions of human nature.

All these classes are for ever separated from each other by unsurmountable barriers; they are not allowed to intermarry, live, or eat together. Whoever transgresses this rule, is banished as being a disgrace to his tribe.

But when they go in pilgrimage to the temple of *Jagrenat*, or the Supreme Being, the case is quite altered. At these seasons, the *Bramins*, the *Raja*, or *Nair*, the husbandman and mechanic, carry their offerings, and eat and drink promiscuously; they are there admonished, that the distinctions of birth are of human institution, and that all men are brethren and children of the same God.

Those religious sentiments, which have given a sanction to this subordination of ranks among the Indians,

have not had sufficient influence to prevent them entirely from aspiring to those marks of distinction which are enjoyed by the superior classes only. That spirit of ambition, so natural to mankind, has sometimes exerted itself; and singular expedients have been tried by men jealous of superiority, to share with the Bramins the veneration of the multitude: this has given rise to a race of monks known in India by the name of Fakirs.

Men of all the tribes, or castes, are permitted to follow this class of life; nothing more is required than to emulate the Bramins in abstracted contemplation and indolence; but, at the same time, they are obliged to surpass them in excessive austerities, which strike the mildest people in the world with religious horror. The appearance of these fanatics exceeds imagination; some of them wallow in the dirt, others accustom themselves to painful postures, extending their arms over their head till they are unable to recover their natural position; and a third sort continue standing seven or eight days together, which occasions prodigious swellings in their legs: they all of them enter into an engagement never to wash their bodies, or comb their hair; and to oppose and disgrace nature, with a view of recommending themselves to its author. The respect paid them by the people is their only recompense for these sacrifices, which infinitely exceed all the mortifications practised by the European monks; if those may be called mortifications, which are nothing more than singular ceremonies practised at an early age, when to get rid of scruples concerning the gratification of natural and forbidden passions, the youthful imagination ardently embraces any system of life, however extravagant, provided it has received the public sanction, and is calculated to administer to their pleasures.

Though the sacred books of the Indians exhibit none of those instances of the marvellous, which sometimes strike so forcibly in the Greek theology, their mythology is as irregular as that of almost any other people. We do not find, in particular, any connection between their religious principles and the several classes that form the basis of their government. An

extract

extract of the Shaftah, which is looked upon by some as a commentary on the Vedam, and by others as an original work, was lately published in England, and has thrown some light upon the subject. The book teaches, that the Eternal Being, absorbed in the contemplation of his own essence, formed the resolution of creating beings, who might partake of his glory. He spoke, and angels rose into existence; they sang in concert the praises of their Creator, and harmony reigned in the celestial region, when two of these spirits, having revolted, drew a legion after them. The Supreme Being drove them into a place of torment, from whence they were released at the intercession of the faithful angels, upon conditions, which at once inspired them with joy and terror. The rebels were sentenced, under different forms, to undergo punishments in the lowest of the fifteen planets, in proportion to the enormity of their first offence; accordingly each angel underwent eighty-seven transmigrations upon earth, before he animated the body of a cow, which holds the first rank among the animal tribes. These different transmigrations are considered as so many stages of expiation preparatory to a state of probation, which commences as soon as the angel transmigrates from the body of the cow into a human body; in this situation the Creator enlarges his intellectual faculties, and constitutes him a free agent; and his good or bad conduct hastens or retards the period of his pardon. The good are at their death re-united to the Supreme Being, and the wicked begin anew the æra of their expiation.

Hence it appears, that, according to this tradition of the Shaftah, the metempsychosis is an actual punishment; and that the souls that animate the generality of the brute creation are nothing more than wicked spirits. This explanation is certainly not universally adopted in India. It was probably invented by some devotee of a melancholy and rigid cast; as the doctrine of the transmigration of souls seems originally to have been founded rather on hope than fear.

In fact, it is natural to suppose that it was only adopted at first as an idea that flattered and soothed

humanity, and would easily be embraced in a country where mankind, living under the influence of a delicious climate, and a mild government, began to be sensible of the shortness of life. A system which extended life beyond its natural limits could not fail to be well received. It is a consolation to an old man, who sees himself deserted by all that is dear to him, to imagine that his enjoyments will still remain, and that his dissolution only opens a passage to another scene of existence: at the same time, it is equally matter of consolation to the friends who attend him in his last moments, to think, that in leaving the world he does not relinquish the hopes of rising once more into life. It is in vain, that a mystical religion endeavours to substitute spiritual and celestial pleasures, in place of those of whose nature we are acquainted with, and which have so often afforded us delight. To vague and abstract ideas, men will ever prefer the actual pleasures arising from sensation, which have already contributed to their happiness; and the simplicity of the Indians behaved to make them prefer living in a state they knew, than in a metaphysical world, the very thoughts of which fatigues the imagination, without satisfying it. Hence the rise and progress of the doctrine of transmigration. Reason, dissatisfied with this illusion, may urge in vain, that without remembrance there can be no consciousness or identity of existence; and that if a man does not remember that he ever existed, he is in the same situation as if he had then existed for the first time.—In this manner sentiment adopts what reason would reject. Happy indeed that people, whose religion presents to the imagination nothing worse than such agreeable dreams!

The Shastah, no doubt, has given a greater air of severity to the doctrine of the metempsychosis, with a view of making it more instrumental in supporting the system of morality it was necessary to establish. In fact, upon this idea of transmigration, considered in the light of a punishment, they explain the duties which the angels were required to perform. The principal ones were charity, abstinence from animal food, and a scrupulous adherence to the profession of their ancestors.

cestors. This last mentioned prejudice, in which all people seem to agree, notwithstanding they differ in their opinions concerning its origin, is without a parallel, if we except the ancient Egyptians, whose institutions had some kind of historical relation to those of the Indians, which are now unknown to us. But though the Egyptian laws established a distinction of ranks, none were held in contempt; while, on the contrary, the laws of Brama, by the introduction, perhaps, of some abuses, seem to have condemned one part of the nation to pain and infamy.

There is reason to believe that the Indians were almost equally civilized when Brama instituted his laws, as they are at present. Whenever a community begins to assume a certain form, it naturally divides into several classes, according to the variety and extent of those arts that are necessary to supply its demands.

Brama most certainly intended, by confirming these different professions by sanctions of religion, and confining the exercise of them perpetually to the same families, to give them a lasting establishment on political principles; but he did not foresee, that by these means he should obstruct the progress of discoveries, which, in the end, might give rise to new occupations. Accordingly, if we may judge by the scrupulous attention paid by the Indians at this day to the laws of Brama, we may affirm that industry has made no advances among this people since the time of this legislator, and that they were then nearly as civilized as at present. This remark is sufficient to give us an idea of the antiquity of these people, who have made no improvements in knowledge since an æra which seems to be the most ancient in history.

Brama likewise prescribed different kinds of food for these respective tribes. The military, and some other ranks, were permitted to eat venison and mutton. Fish was allowed to some husbandmen, and mechanics. Others lived upon milk and vegetables. None of the Bramins ate any thing that had life. Upon the whole, these people are extremely sober; but their abstinence varies in proportion to the greater or less labour required in their professions.

They marry in their infancy, and their wives maintain a character of fidelity unknown in other countries. Some of the superior ranks are allowed the privilege of having several wives. It is well known that the wives of the Bramins burn themselves on the death of their husbands; and they seem to be the only persons who are obliged to do so by the laws. Others, however, are fond of following their example, led by that point of honour to which so many victims are sacrificed in all countries. This cruel injunction is confined to widows who have no issue. Those who have children are expected to take care of their education and settlement in the world. Were it not for this precaution, the state, which ought to be the guardian of these orphans, would be loaded with a very oppressive burden.

Since the Moguls became masters of Indostan, these horrible spectacles have been very much diminished; as it costs a sum too considerable for any but the rich to obtain a licence for that purpose. But this obstacle has sometimes made their inclinations the stronger. Some women have been known to devote themselves for several years to the lowest and most laborious employments, in order to raise money to defray the expences of this extravagant suicide. Others have been more eagerly ambitious of sacrificing themselves, in proportion as scenes of this kind became less common.

A few years ago, a young, beautiful, and rich widow, of Surat, aspired to this singular honour. The governor refused to grant her permission to consign herself, together with so many valuable endowments, to the flames. The lady, full of indignation, took a handful of burning coals, and seemingly regardless of the pain, said in a firm tone to the governor, *Consider not alone the tenderness of my age; see with what insensibility I hold this fire in my hands; and know, that with equal constancy I shall throw myself into the flames.*

All the women, however, are not animated with this enthusiastic intrepidity. Many of them, who were ambitious of devoting themselves to the manes of their husbands, have been seized with an involuntary tremor when their approaching fate appeared in all its horrors.

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To encourage them to this great action, so repugnant to reason and nature, a mixture is given them, which, by stupifying the senses, removes the apprehensions which the preparation for death must unavoidably occasion. The moment the intoxication takes place, these unfortunate widows are directly thrown upon the fatal pile; and to this stratagem, invented by the advocates for fanaticism, are to be attributed those seeming signs of joy and satisfaction which appear in their countenances at the sight of those devouring flames that are ready to reduce them to ashes.

This institution is not attributed to Brama, but rather seems to be the invention of some Bramin who carried his jealousy beyond the grave. This piece of refinement, dictated by a barbarous and over-strained affection, is very suitable to the character of those superstitious mortals, who think there is an essential merit in rigid observances, and what they call a superior purity.

The Bramins are of a mild, humane disposition, and are almost strangers to the passions that prevail among us. What object can ambition have among men who are destined to continue always in the same state? They love peaceable labour and an indolent life; and often quote this passage of one of their favourite authors, *'Tis better to sit still than to walk; better to sleep than to be awake: But death is best of all.*

Their temperance, and the excessive heats of the climate, restrain the violence of their passions, and prevent them from having a strong desire for amorous pleasures. Avarice, which predominates chiefly in people of weak bodies, and little minds, is almost their only passion.

We may judge of their ingenuity in arts by the specimens that are brought from India. The execution is difficult; but they are destitute of taste and elegance. The sciences are still more neglected; nor have they the least notion of mechanics: before they were acquainted with the Mohammedans, no bridges had ever been erected. The Pagodas are in general nothing more than miserable structures of a quadrangular form, admitting no light but at the entrance, which

which always fronts the east; this defect is supplied by tapers, which are kept burning by the pious and devout. It is asserted, however, that their great Pagodas are regularly built, and that the ornaments both within and without are of considerable value. They rise in the form of a cross; and the idol is placed in the centre of the building, so that the parties who are not admitted into the temple may have a sight of it thro' the gates. In these Pagodas there are cisterns of water for the purification of the Indians. These superstitious ceremonies are chiefly observed by the people. It is said that there are still some of the Bramins who know how to calculate eclipses; but it is not very easy to discover, whether this is done by means of some tables left them by their ancestors, or whether they are actually acquainted with the theory previously necessary towards the solution of such problems.

The military class have chosen to fix their residence in the northern provinces, and the Peninsula is chiefly inhabited by the inferior tribes. Hence it has happened, that all the powers who have attacked India by sea have met with so little resistance. It may not be amiss to remind those philosophers who maintain that man is a frugivorous animal, that the military people who subsist upon animal food, are more robust, courageous, and sprightly, and live longer than those of the other classes who feed merely upon vegetables; at the same time it must be owned, that the difference between the inhabitants of the north and south is too uniform to be attributed entirely to the particular kind of nourishment: the cold of the north, the spring of the air, less fertility, and more labour and exercise, with a more varied kind of life; all these whet the appetite, brace the nerves, excite a spirit of resolution and activity, and give a firmer tone to the organs; on the other hand, the heats of the south, together with great quantities of fruit, an inactive life, a constant perspiration, a more free and more lavish use of the means conducive to population, more indulgence in effeminate pleasures, and a sedentary and uniform course of life, while they increase the number of births, occasion a speedier dissolution. Upon the whole, it would seem,

seem, that though man was not by nature designed to consume the flesh of animals, he is endowed with a power of accommodating himself to the various modes of life that prevail in every different climate, and either hunts and lives upon flesh, or vegetables, or turns shepherd or husbandman, according to the fertility or barrenness of the soil.

The religion of Brama was anciently, and still continues to be, divided into eighty-three sects, which agree in some fundamental points, and have no disputes about the rest; they live in amity with men of all persuasions, as their own religion obliges them not to make proselytes. The Indians seldom admit strangers to their worship, and always with the greatest reluctance. This was in some measure the spirit of the ancient superstition; as it appears among the Egyptians, the Jews, the Greeks, and the Romans: and though it has occasioned fewer ravages than the zeal of making converts, it prevents the intercourses of society, and raises an additional barrier between one people and another.

When we consider how kindly nature has provided for the happiness of these fertile countries, where every want is easily supplied, and that the compassionate temper and morals of the Indians render them equally averse to persecution and the spirit of conquest, we cannot help lamenting, that a barbarous inequality should have distinguished one part of the nation by power and privileges, while the rest of the inhabitants are loaded with misery and contempt: What can be the cause of this strange madness? It must doubtless be traced to that principle which has been the constant source of all the calamities that have befallen the inhabitants of this globe.

We need only suppose that a powerful people, with few lights to direct them, adopt an original error, which ignorance brings into fashion: as soon as this error becomes general, it is made the basis of an entire system of politics and morality: and men begin to find, that their innocent propensities run counter to their duty. In order to conform to this new plan of morality, they must perpetually be offering violence to the order

order of nature. This continual struggle will introduce a most amazing contrariety into their manners; and the nation will be composed of a set of wretches, who will pass their lives in mutually tormenting each other, and accusing nature. Such is the picture of all the people upon earth, excepting, perhaps, a few societies of savages. Absurd prejudices have perverted human reason, and even stifled that instinct which teaches animals to resist oppression and tyranny. Multitudes of the human race implicitly submit to be a sort of vassals to a small number of men who oppress them.

Such is the fatal progress of that original error, which imposture has either produced or kept up in the mind of man. May true knowledge revive those rights of reasonable beings, which to be recovered, want only to be known! Ye sages of the earth, philosophers of every nation, it is yours alone to make laws, by pointing them out to your countrymen. Take the glorious resolution to instruct your fellow-creatures; and be assured, that it is much easier to propagate truth than error. Mankind, animated by the desire of happiness, to which you will point the way, will listen to you with attention. Make those millions of hireling slaves blush, who are always ready, at the command of their masters, to destroy their fellow-citizens. Rouze all the powers of human nature to oppose this subversion of social laws. Teach mankind, that liberty is the institution of God; authority, that of man. Expose those mysterious arts which hold the world in chains and darkness; and let the people be sensible how far their credulity has been imposed upon; and by re-assuming, with one accord, the use of their faculties, let them vindicate the honour of the human race.

Besides the natives, the Portuguese found Mohammedans in India; some of whom came from the borders of Africa. The greatest part of them were descendants of the Arabs, who either settled here or made incursions. By the force of arms they made themselves masters of all the countries as far as the Indus. The most enterprising among them passed this

river,

river, and by degrees penetrated into the extremities of the East. On this immense continent they became the factors of Arabia and Egypt, and were treated with distinguished respect by all the sovereigns who wished to keep up an intercourse with these countries. Here they multiplied to a great degree; for, as their religion allowed polygamy, they married in every place where they made any stay.

Their success was still more rapid, and at the same time more permanent, in the islands that lye scattered in the Indian ocean. The want of commerce procured them the best reception, both from princes and their subjects. They soon rose to the highest dignities in these petty states, and became the arbiters of government. They took advantage of the superiority of their knowledge, and the support they received from their country, to establish an universal dominion. The despots, and their vassals, in order to ingratiate themselves with them, abandoned a religion to which they had no great attachment, for new opinions which might procure them some advantages. This sacrifice was the easier made, as the preachers of the Koran by no means hindered them from mingling their ancient superstitions with those they wished to establish.

These Mohammedan Arabs, who were apostles and merchants at the same time, had already propagated their religion, by purchasing a great number of slaves, to whom, after they had been circumcised, and instructed in their doctrine, they gave their freedom; but as a certain pride prevented them from mixing their blood with that of these freedmen, the latter in time became a distinct people, inhabiting the coast of the Indian Peninsula from Goa to Madras; they are at present known in Malabar by the name of Pooliahs, and by that of Coolies in Coromandel; they understand neither the Persian, the Arabian, nor the Moorish language; and confine themselves to that of the countries in which they live; the generality are addicted to commerce, and profess a species of Mohammedanism extremely corrupted by the Indian superstitions.

Indostan, which has since been almost entirely reduced

ced under a foreign yoke, was, at the time of the arrival of the Portuguese, divided between the kings of Cambaya, Delhi, Bisnagar, Narzingua, and Calicut, each of whom reckoned several sovereigns more or less powerful, among their tributaries. The last of these monarchs, who is better known by the name of Zamorin, which answers to that of emperor, than by the name of his capital city, possessed the most maritime states, and his empire extended over all Malabar.

There is an ancient tradition, that when the Arabs began to settle in the Indies, in the eighth century, the king of Malabar took so great a fancy to their religion, that he not only embraced it, but determined to end his days at Mecca. Calicut, where he embarked, became a place so dear and so respectable to the Moors, that they were insensibly led to make it the constant rendezvous of their ships. Thus, by the sole effect of this superstition, this harbour, incommodious and dangerous as it was, became the richest staple of these countries. Precious stones, pearls, amber, ivory, china-ware, gold and silver, silks and cottons, indigo, sugar, all kinds of spices, valuable woods, perfumes, beautiful varnish, and whatever conduces to the elegance of life, were carried thither from all parts of the east. Some of these rich commodities came by sea; but as navigation was neither so safe nor so quick as it is now, a great deal was brought over land by buffaloes and elephants.

GAMA having got notice of these particulars when he touched at Melinda, hired an able pilot to conduct him to that port in which trade was the most flourishing. Here he fortunately met with a Moor of Tunis, versant in the Portuguese language, who having been formerly struck with admiration at the great achievements performed by this nation on the coasts of Barbary, had conceived a fondness for it which overcame his prejudices. This predilection engaged the Moor to use all his interest in favour of these strangers, who put themselves entirely under his direction. He procured Gama an audience of the Zamorin, who proposed

The Portuguese establish a settlement on the coast of Malabar.

sed an alliance, and a treaty of commerce with the king his master. This was upon the point of being concluded, when the Mussulmen found means to throw a suspicion upon a rival power, whose courage, activity, and knowledge, they dreaded. The reports they made to him of its ambition and restlessness made such an impression on the mind of the prince, that he resolved to destroy those adventurers whom he had just received so favourably.

Gama being informed of this change by his faithful guide, sent his brother on board the fleet, telling him, *If you should hear that I am thrown into prison, or put to death, I forbid you, as your commander, either to come to my assistance, or revenge my loss; set sail immediately, and inform the king of the particulars of our voyage.*

They were happily not reduced to these extremities. The Zamorin, though possessed both of the power and inclination, wanted courage to put his design in execution; and the admiral had leave to rejoin his company. Having made some well-timed reprisals, which procured a restitution of the merchandize he had left a pledge in Calicut, he sailed for Europe.

It is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at Lisbon on his return. The inhabitants beheld themselves on the point of establishing the richest commerce in the world, and being equally addicted to avarice and superstition, uttered themselves with the hopes of propagating their religion, either by persuasion, or by the force of arms. The Pope, who slight no opportunities of confirming the opinion that he was the sovereign of the earth, gave the Portuguese all the coasts they should discover in the east, and inspired this little state with all the folly of conquest.

Numbers were eager to embark on board the new fleet that was fitted out for an expedition to the Indies. Thirteen vessels that sailed from the Tagus, under the command of Alvarès Cabral, arrived at Calicut, and restored some of the Zamorin's subjects that Gama had carried away with him. These Indians spoke highly of the treatment they had received; but it was a long time before the Zamorin was reconciled to the Portuguese. The Moorish party prevailed; and the

people of Calicut, seduced by their intrigues, massacred fifty of the adventurers. Cabral, in revenge, burnt all the Arabian vessels in the harbour, cannonaded the town; then sailed to Cochin, and afterwards to Cananor.

The kings of these two towns gave him spices, offered him gold and silver, and proposed an alliance with him against the Zamorin, to whom they were tributaries. The kings of Onor, Culan, and several other princes, made the same overtures; flattering themselves that they should all be relieved from the tribute they paid to the Zamorin, and that they would be enabled to extend the frontiers of their states, and to see their harbours crowded with the spoils of Asia. This general infatuation procured to the Portuguese so great an ascendant over the whole country of Malabar, that, wherever they appeared, they gave laws. No sovereign was suffered to enter into an alliance with them, unless he would acknowledge himself a vassal of the court of Lisbon, give leave that a citadel should be built in his capital, and sell his merchandise at the price fixed by the buyer. No foreign merchant could get a cargo till the Portuguese had completed their lading, and no person was suffered to navigate these seas without producing passports from them. The wars in which they were unavoidably engaged gave little interruption to their trade: with a handful of men they defeated numerous armies; their enemies met them every where, and always fled before them; and, in a short time, the ships of the Moors, of the Zamorin, and his dependents, no longer dared to make their appearance.

The Portuguese, thus become the conquerors of the East, were perpetually sending rich cargoes to their own country, which resounded with the fame of their exploits. The port of Lisbon gradually became the resort of all the shipping in Europe. It became the grand mart of the merchandise of India: for the Portuguese, who brought it from the very spot, sold it at a lower rate than the traders of other nations.

To secure and extend these advantages, it became necessary to call in the aid of reflection, to correct and strengthen

strengthen what had hitherto been the offspring of chance, of a singular intrepidity, and of a happy concurrence of circumstances. They wanted to establish a system of power and commerce, which, while it was extensive enough to comprehend all objects, should, at the same time, be so well connected, that all the parts of the grand structure they meant to raise should mutually strengthen each other. Notwithstanding the information the court of Lisbon had received from the account transmitted from India, and the testimony of those who had hitherto been intrusted with the management of her interests in that quarter, she wisely reposed all her confidence in Alphonso Albuquerque, the most discerning of all the Portuguese who had been in Asia.

The new viceroy acquitted himself beyond expectation. He found it necessary that the Portuguese should have an establishment which might easily be defended, where there was a good harbour and a wholesome air, and where they might refresh themselves, after the fatigues of their passage from Europe. With this view, he cast his eyes upon Goa, which he foresaw would be an important acquisition to Lisbon.

Goa, which rises in the form of an amphitheatre, is situated near the middle of the coast of Malabar, upon an island separated from the continent by two branches of a river which falls into the sea, at some distance from the city, after having formed under its walls one of the finest harbours in the world. This island is reckoned to be ten leagues in circumference. Within this little spot are to be seen hills, vallies, woods, canals, springs of excellent water, a city magnificently built, market-towns, and large villages. Before the entrance into the port stand the two peninsulas Salfet and Barda, which equally serve the purposes of defence and shelter. They are guarded by forts lined with artillery, where all ships are obliged to stop before they come to an anchor in the harbour.

Goa, though not so considerable at that time as it has been since, was looked upon as the most advantageous post in India. It belonged to the king of De-

can; but Idalcan, who was intrusted with the government of it, had assumed an independency, and endeavoured to extend his power in Malabar. While this usurper was pursuing his schemes on the continent, Albuquerque appeared at the gates of Goa, took the city by storm, and acquired this valuable advantage with very little loss.

Idalcan, apprized of the misfortune that had happened, did not hesitate a moment what measures he should take. In conjunction even with the Indians his enemies, who were almost as much interested in this matter as himself, he marched towards the capital, with a degree of expedition never known before in that country. The Portuguese, having no firm footing, and finding themselves unable to preserve their conquest, retreated to their ships, which kept their station in the harbour, and sent to Cochin for a reinforcement. While they were waiting for it, their provisions failed. Idalcan offered them a supply, giving them to understand, *That he chose to conquer by arms, and not by famine.* It was customary at that time, in the Indian wars, for the armies to suffer provisions to be carried to their enemies. Albuquerque rejected the offer made him, with this reply, *That he would receive no presents from Idalcan till they were friends.* The succour he hourly expected never arrived.

This disappointment determined him to retreat, and to postpone the execution of his darling project to a more favourable opportunity, which presented itself a few months after. Idalcan being obliged to take the field again to preserve his dominions from absolute destruction, Albuquerque made a sudden attack upon Goa, which he carried by storm, and fortified himself in the place. As the harbour of Calicut was good for nothing, and ceased to be frequented by the Arabian vessels, all its trade and riches were transferred to this city, which became the metropolis of all the Portuguese settlements in India.

The natives of the country were too weak, too dispirited, and too much at variance, to put a stop to the successes of this enterprising nation. Nothing remained to be done but to guard against the Egyptians;

ans; nor was the least precaution either omitted or neglected.

EGYPT, which is considered as the parent of all historical antiquities, the source of policy, and the nursery of arts and sciences, after having remained for ages in a state of separation from the rest of the world, who were held in contempt by this wise country, understood and practised navigation. The inhabitants had long neglected the Mediterranean, where they did not certainly expect any great advantages, and directed their course towards the Indian ocean, which was the true channel of wealth.

*The manner
of carrying on
trade in India
before the con-
quests of the
Portuguese.*

Struck with the situation of this country between two seas, one of which opens the road to the east, and the other to the west, Alexander had formed the design of fixing the seat of his empire in Egypt, and to make it the centre of trade to the whole world. This prince, who had more discernment than any other conqueror, saw, that if it were possible to form an union between his present and future acquisitions, he must make choice of a country which nature seems to have placed, as it were, in contact with Africa and Asia to connect them with Europe. The premature death of the greatest captain that history and fable have held forth to the admiration of mankind, would for ever have annihilated these vast projects, had they not been in part pursued by Ptolemy, one of his lieutenants; who, when the most magnificent spoil ever known came to be divided, claimed Egypt for his share.

In the reign of this new sovereign, and his immediate successors, commerce made prodigious improvements. Alexandria was the mart of the merchandise that came from India, by the Red Sea, to the port of Berenice *.

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* To facilitate the communication betwixt these two places, some historians say, a canal was dug, which beginning at one of the branches of the Nile, was continued all the way till it discharged itself into the Arabian Gulph. By means of waters united together with
great

A writer, who has entered deeply into this subject, and whose accounts we follow, tells us, that some of the numerous vessels that were built in consequence of these connections, traded only in the gulph with Arabians and Abyssinians: among others which ventured out into the main ocean, some of them sailed southward to the right along the eastern coasts of Africa, as far as the island of Madagascar; others steering to the left towards the Persian Gulph, went even as far as the Euphrates, to trade with the people on its banks, particularly with the Greeks, whom Alexander had brought there with him in his expeditions. Others, whom avarice had rendered still more enterprising, penetrated as far as the mouths of the Indus, traversed the coast of Malabar, and touched at the island of Ceylon, known by the antients under the name of Taprobane. A very small number passed through Coromandel to go up the river Ganges, as far as Palybotra, a town the most celebrated in India on account of its riches. Thus industry proceeded, by gradual advances, from one river or coast to another, to appropriate the productions of those countries that abound most in fruits, flowers, perfumes, precious stones, and all the delicacies of voluptuous luxury.

The boats they made use of in these expeditions were long and flat, not unlike those that are seen upon the Nile. Before the invention of the compass, in consequence of which, larger vessels, carrying more sail, were fitted out for the main ocean, they were obliged to row close to the shore, and to follow the windings of the coast from one point of land to another. They were

great art, and a great number of sluices ingeniously constructed, they were enabled to make it fifty miles long, twenty-five fathoms broad, and of such a depth as made it necessary to have buildings to support it. This superb undertaking, for natural causes which it would be too tedious particularly to unfold, did not produce the advantages that were expected, and went insensibly to ruin. It was however kept in repair as long as it was possible; and in the dry and sandy deserts, through which it is necessary to pass in going from the Red Sea to the place where they embarked for Alexandria, large inns and reservoirs of water were erected at the public expence, where travellers and caravans could have an opportunity of reposing themselves, together with their camels.

were obliged to lessen the sides of their ships, in order to weaken the power of the wind over them; and their depth, for fear of striking against rocks, sands, or shallows. Thus a voyage, not so long by one third as those which are now performed in less than six months, sometimes lasted five years or more. What their vessels wanted in size, was supplied by their numbers; and the disadvantages of their slow sailing were compensated by the frequent squadrons they fitted out.

The Egyptians exported to India, as has been done ever since, woollen manufactures, iron, lead, copper, some small pieces of workmanship in glass and silver; in exchange for which they received ivory, ebony, tortoise-shell, white and printed linens, silks, pearls, precious stones, cinnamon, spices, and particularly frankincense; which was a perfume the most in esteem, on account of its being used in divine worship, and contributing to the gratification of princes. It sold at so high a price, that the merchants counterfeited it under pretence of improving it. So apprehensive is avarice of being defrauded by poverty, that the workmen who were employed in preparing it were naked; having only a girdle about their loins, the ends of which were sealed by the director of the manufacture.

All the sea-faring and trading nations in the Mediterranean came to the ports of Egypt to purchase the produce of India. When Carthage and Corinth fell victims to the vices their opulence had introduced, the Egyptians were themselves obliged to export the riches with which these cities formerly loaded their own vessels. As their maritime power increased, they extended their navigation as far as Cadiz. They could scarcely supply the demands of Rome, whose luxury kept pace with its conquests; at the same time that they were arrived at such a pitch of extravagance themselves, that the accounts given of it have the air of romance. Cleopatra, with whom their empire and history expired, was as profuse as she was voluptuous. But notwithstanding these incredible expences, the advantages they derived from the trade of the Indies were so great, that, after they were subdued and spoiled, lands, provisions, and merchandise, fetched double
the

the price at Rome. If Pliny may be credited, the conqueror, by re-instating the conquered in this source of opulence, which served rather to flatter their vanity than to aggrandize their power, gained twenty thousand *per cent.* Though it is easy to see that this calculation is exaggerated, we may from thence form a conjecture what profits must have been reaped in those distant ages, when the Indians were less acquainted with their own interest.

While the Romans had virtue enough to preserve the power acquired by their ancestors, Egypt very much contributed to support the dignity of the empire, by the riches it brought thither from the Indies. But the fulness of luxury, like the corpulency of the body, is a symptom of an approaching decay. This vast empire sunk under its own weight, and like leavers of wood or metal, whose excessive length contributes to their weakness, broke into two parts.

Egypt was annexed to the eastern empire, which lasted longer than that of the west; not being attacked so soon, or with so much vigour. If riches could have supplied the place of courage, its situation and resources would even have made it invincible; but the inhabitants of this empire had nothing but stratagem to defend it against an enemy, who, besides the enthusiasm of a new religion, were animated with all the strength of an uncivilized people. A torrent thus increasing, and destroying every thing in its passage, was not to be stopped by so slight a barrier. In the seventh century it laid waste several provinces, and Egypt among the rest; which having been one of the principal empires of antiquity, and the model of all modern monarchies, was destined to sink into a state of languor and insignificance, in which it remains to this day.

The Greeks comforted themselves under this misfortune, on finding that the wars with the Saracens had diverted the stream of the Indian commerce from Alexandria to Constantinople, by two well-known channels; one of these was the Euxine, or Black Sea, where it was usual to embark to go up the Phasis. Large vessels were at first employed, and afterwards smaller ones

ones were introduced, which sailed as far as Serapana from whence, in four or five days, the merchants conveyed their commodities by land-carriage to the river Cyrus, which falls into the Caspian Sea. Having crossed this tempestuous ocean, they arrived at the mouth of the Oxus, which extended almost as far as the source of the Indus, and from whence they returned the same way, laden with the treasures of Asia. This was one of the means of communication between this great continent, always naturally rich, and that of Europe, which was then poor, and ruined by its own inhabitants.

The other channel of communication was less difficult. The Indian vessels, sailing from different coasts, passed the Persian Gulph, and arrived at the banks of the Euphrates, where they unloaded their cargo; which, from this river, was in one day sent by land-carriage to Palmyra. This city, the ruins of which still inspire ideas of its former opulence, transported this merchandise through the deserts to the confines of Syria. By this rich commerce, it became more flourishing than could have been expected from its sandy situation. Since its destruction, the caravans, after some changes, constantly took the road of Aleppo, which, by means of the port of Alexandretta, turned the current of wealth to Constantinople, which at length became the general market of the productions of India.

This advantage might alone have retarded the fall of the empire, and, perhaps, have restored it to its ancient splendour; but that had been acquired by its arms, its virtues, and its frugal manners; and it was now destitute of all those means of maintaining its prosperity. The Greeks, corrupted by the prodigious accession of wealth, which their exclusive commerce poured in upon them almost without any care or activity of their own, abandoned themselves to an indolent and effeminate way of life, infallibly leading to luxury; to the trivial amusements of glittering shows, and the voluptuous refinements of art; to futile, obscure, and sophistical disquisitions on matters of taste, sentiment, and even religion and politics. They suffered themselves to be oppressed, without asserting their
right

right to be governed, and either made their court to a successive race of tyrants, by the most abject adulation, or irritated them by a faint resistance. The Emperors having bought these people, sold them to all the monopolizers who aimed to enrich themselves by the ruin of the state. The government, still more corrupted than its subjects, suffered its navy to decay, and rested its sole defence on the treaties it entered into with those strangers whose ships frequented its ports. The Italians had insensibly ingrossed the article of transportation, which the Greeks had for a long time kept in their own hands. This branch of business, which is rather laborious than profitable, was doubly advantageous to a trading nation, whose chief riches consist in maintaining their vigour by labour. Inactivity hastened the destruction of Constantinople, which was pressed and surrounded on all sides by the conquest of the Turks. The Genoese fell into the net which their perfidy and avarice had woven for them. Mohammed the Second drove them from Caffa, to which place they had, of late years, drawn the greatest part of the trade of Asia.

The Venetians did not wait for this event to give them an opportunity of reviving their connections with Egypt. They had experienced more indulgence than they expected from a government established since the last crusade, and nearly resembling that of Algiers. The Mammelucs, who at the time of these wars had usurped a throne they had hitherto supported, were for the most part slaves, who were brought from Circassia in their infancy, and trained up early to a military life. The supreme authority was vested in a chief, and a council composed of four and twenty principal persons. This military corps, which ease would unavoidably have enervated, was recruited every year by a croud of brave adventurers, who flocked from all parts, with a view of making their fortune. These needy people were prevailed upon, by a sum of money and promises, to consent that their country should be made the mart of Indian merchandize. Thus they were bribed into a measure which the political interest of their state always required them to adopt. The inhabitants

bitants of Pisa and Florence, the Catalans, and the Genoese, received some benefit from this change; but it was of signal advantage to the Venetians, by whose management it was effected. Things were in this situation when the Portuguese made their appearance in the Indies.

This great event, and the consequences that immediately followed it, occasioned much uneasiness at Venice. This Republic, so celebrated for its wisdom, had lately been disconcerted by a league, which it could not oppose, and certainly did not foresee. Several princes of different interests, who were rivals in power, and had pretensions of an opposite nature, united, in defiance of all the rules of justice and policy, to destroy a state which had not given any of them the least umbrage: and even Lewis the XII. whose interest was most concerned in the preservation of Venice, brought it to the brink of ruin by the victory of Aignadel. The misunderstandings which must necessarily arise among such allies, joined to the prudence of the Republic, saved it from this danger, which, though more imminent in appearance, was, in fact, not so great nor so immediate as that they were now exposed to, by the discovery of a passage to the Indies by the Cape of Good Hope.

Venice soon perceived that her commerce, and consequently her power, was on the point of being transferred to the Portuguese. Every expedient was tried that an able administration could suggest. Some of the skilful emissaries, which the state took care to retain and employ dexterously in all places, persuaded the Arabs settled in their country, and those that were dispersed over India, or the eastern coasts of Africa, that as their interest was equally concerned with that of Venice, they ought to unite with her against a nation, which had made itself mistress of the common source of their riches.

The rumour of this league reached the Soudan of Egypt, whose attention was already roused by the misfortunes he felt, as well as those he foresaw. The customs, which constituted a principal branch of his revenue, and by which five *per cent.* was levied on the im-
portation,

portation, and ten on the exportation of Indian goods, began to bring in little or nothing. The frequent bankruptcies, which were the necessary consequence of the embarrassment of affairs, exasperated men's minds against the government, which is always responsible to the people for the calamities they endure. The militia, which was ill paid, fearing that their pay would be still more precarious, raised mutinies, which are more to be dreaded on the decline of a state, than in the time of its prosperity. Egypt was equally a sufferer by the trade carried on by the Portuguese, as by the obstruction her own was exposed to by their encroachments.

The Egyptians might have extricated themselves from these inconveniencies, by fitting out a fleet; but the Red Sea afforded no materials for ship-building. The Venetians removed this obstacle, by sending wood, and other materials, to Alexandria. They were conveyed by the Nile to Cairo, from whence they were carried by camels to Suez. From this celebrated port, in the year 1508, four large vessels, one galleon, two galleys, and three galliots, sailed to India.

*The Portuguese
make themselves
masters of the
Red Sea.*

THE Portuguese, who foresaw this storm arising, had the preceding year laid a scheme to prevent it, by making themselves masters of the Red Sea; confident, that with this advantage they should have nothing to fear from this confederacy, nor from the combined forces of Egypt and Arabia. With this view, they formed a plan to seize upon the island of Socotora, well known to the ancients by the name of Dioscorides, on account of the abundance and excellence of its aloes. It lies in the gulph of the Red Sea, one hundred and eighty leagues from the straits of Babelmandel, formed by the Cape of Guardafui on the African side, and by the Cape of Fartack on the side of Arabia.

Tristan D'Acugna sailed from Portugal with a considerable armament to attack this island. Upon his landing, he was encountered by Ibrahim, son of the king of the people of Fartack, who was sovereign of part of Arabia and Socotora. This young prince was
killed

killed in the engagement; the Portuguese besieged the only town that was in the island, and carried it by storm, though it was defended to the last extremity by a garrison superior in number to their small army. The soldiers that composed this garrison, determined not to survive the son of their sovereign, refused to capitulate, and were all, to the last man, put to the sword. The intrepidity of D'Acugna's troops proved an over-match for their bravery.

This successful enterprise was not attended with the advantages that were expected from it. It was found that the island was barren, that it had no port, and that the ships that came from the Red Sea never touched there, though they could not enter the gulph without taking an observation of it. Accordingly, the Egyptian fleet found a safe passage into the Indian ocean, where it joined that of Cambaya. These united armaments, in every attack, proved too hard for the Portuguese, who were considerably weakened by the great number of vessels they had lately fitted out to carry merchandise to Europe. This triumph, however, was soon over; the conquered party got reinforcements, and regained their superiority, which they ever after preserved. The armaments, which continued to come from Egypt, were always beaten and dispersed by the small Portuguese squadrons that cruized at the entrance of the gulph.

As, however, these skirmishes kept up a constant alarm, and occasioned some expence, Albuquerque thought it incumbent on him to put an end to them by the destruction of Suez. But a thousand obstacles opposed the execution of this project.

The Red Sea, which takes its name from the corals, madrepores, and marine plants, which line its bottom almost throughout, or perhaps only from the sand which discolours its waters, is surrounded on one side by Arabia, and on the other by Upper Ethiopia and Egypt. It measures six hundred and eighty leagues from the Island of Socotora to the famous Isthmus which unites Africa to Asia. As its length is very considerable, and its breadth small, and no river falls into it of sufficient force to counteract the influence of the tide, it

is more affected by the motions of the great ocean than any of the inland seas nearly in the same latitude. It is not much exposed to tempests; the winds usually blow from the north and south, and being periodical, like the monsoons in India, invariably determine the season of falling into, or out of this sea. It may be divided into three parts; the middle division is open and navigable at all times, its depth being from twenty-five to sixty fathoms. The other two, which lye nearer the land, though they abound in rocks, are preferred by the inhabitants of the neighbouring coasts, who being obliged to keep close to the shore on account of the smallness of their vessels, never launch out into the principal channel, unless they expect a squall of wind. The difficulty, not to say impossibility, of landing in the harbours of this coast, makes the navigation dangerous for vessels of large burthen, as nothing is to be met with in their passage but a great number of desert islands, which are barren, and besides destitute of fresh water.

Albuquerque, notwithstanding his abilities, experience, and resolution, could not surmount so many obstacles. After entering a considerable way into the Red Sea, he was obliged to return with his fleet, which had suffered perpetual hardships, and had been exposed to the greatest dangers. A restless and cruel spirit of enterprise prompted him to employ methods for the accomplishment of his designs, which, though of a still bolder cast, he thought could not fail of success. He wanted to prevail with the Emperor of Ethiopia, who solicited the protection of Portugal to turn the course of the Nile, so as to open a passage for him into the Red Sea. Egypt would then have become in a great measure uninhabitable, or at least unfit for commerce. In the mean time, he proposed to transport into Arabia, by the gulph of Persia, three or four hundred horse, which he thought would be sufficient to plunder Medina and Mecca. He imagined, that by so bold an expedition he should strike terror into the Mohammedans, and put a stop to that prodigious concourse of pilgrims which was the main support of a trade he wanted totally to extirpate.

Other

Other enterprises, of a less hazardous nature, and attended with more immediate advantage, led him to postpone the ruin of a power, whose influence as a rival was the only circumstance necessary to be guarded against at the present juncture. The conquest of Egypt by the Turks, a few years after, made it requisite to act with the greatest precaution. Those men of genius, who were qualified to pursue the series of events, which had preceded and followed the discovery of the passage by the Cape of Good Hope, and to form deep conjectures concerning the revolutions which this new tract of navigation must necessarily prevent, could not help considering this remarkable transaction as the most important æra in the history of the world.

Europe began to recover its strength by slow degrees, and to shake off the yoke of slavery, which had disgraced its inhabitants from the time of the Roman conquests down to the institution of the feudal laws. Innumerable tyrants, who kept multitudes in a state of oppression and slavery, had been ruined by the folly of the crusades. To defray the expences of these wild expeditions, they were obliged to sell their lands and castles, and for a pecuniary consideration, to allow their vassals some privileges, which at length almost re-instated them in the rank of human beings. From that time, the right of property began to be introduced among private persons, and gave them that kind of independence, without which property itself is a mere illusion. Thus the first dawnings of liberty in Europe were, however contrary to the intention of them, owing to the crusades; and the rage of conquest for once contributed to the welfare of mankind.

Had it not been for these discoveries made by Vasco de Gama, the spirit of liberty would have been again extinguished, and perhaps for ever. The Turks had lately expelled those savage nations, who, pouring out from the extremities of the globe, had expelled the Romans, to become, like them, the scourge of human kind; and our barbarous institutions would have been followed by oppressions still more intolerable. This must inevitably have been the case, if the savage conquerors of Egypt had not been repulsed by the Portuguese

tuguese in their several expeditions to India. Their possession of the riches of Asia would have secured their claim to those of Europe. Masters of the trade of the whole world, they must consequently have had the greatest maritime force that ever was known. What opposition could our continent then have made to the progress of a people, whose religion and policy equally animated them to conquest?

Dissentions prevailed in England on account of its liberties; France contended for the interests of its sovereigns; Germany for those of its religion; and Italy was employed in adjusting the mutual claims of a tyrant and an impostor. Europe, over-run with fanatics and armies, resembled a sick person, who, falling into a delirium, in the transports of madness opens his veins till he faints with loss of blood and spirits. In this state of weakness and anarchy, it was ill prepared to resist the incursions of the Turks.

As the calm which succeeds the violence of civil wars makes a nation formidable to its neighbours, so the dissentions which divide it as certainly expose it to ravage and oppression. The depraved morals of the clergy would likewise have favoured the introduction of a new worship; and we should have been condemned to a state of slavery, without any hopes of release. In truth, among all the political and religious systems that oppress mankind, there is not one allows so little scope to liberty as that of the Mussulman's. Throughout almost all Europe, a religion adverse to government, and introduced without its patronage; rules of morality disordered without order or precision in obscure writings, capable of an infinite variety of interpretations; authority ingrossed by priests and princes, who are perpetually contesting their right to rule over their fellow creatures; political and civil institutions daily formed, in contradiction to the prevailing religion which condemns an inequality of rank and ambition; a turbulent and enterprising administration, which, in order to tyrannize with a higher hand, is perpetually setting one part of the state at variance with the other: All these principles of discord must necessarily keep the minds of men in constant agitation. Is it surprising,

sing, that, on the view of this tumultuous scene, nature should start from her entrancement, and earnestly ask, "Whether man was born free?"

But under a religion which consecrates tyranny, by fixing the throne on the altar; which seems to curb the spirits of ambition, by encouraging voluptuousness; and to cherish a spirit of indolence, by forbidding the exercise of the understanding, there is little reason to hope for any considerable revolutions. Thus the Turks, who frequently strangle their master, have never entertained a thought of changing their government. This is an idea beyond the reach of minds enervated and corrupted like theirs. Hence it appears, that the whole world would have lost its liberty, had not the most superstitious, and perhaps the most enslaved nation in Christendom, checked the progress of the Mohammedan fanaticism, and put a stop to the career of victories, by depriving them of those sources of wealth which were necessary to the success of their enterprises. Albuquerque went still further; not content with having taken effectual measures to prevent any vessel from passing from the Arabian sea to the Indian ocean, he attempted to get the command of the Persian gulph.

At the mouth of the strait of Mocandon, which leads into the Persian gulph, lyes the island of Gombroon. In the eleventh century, an Arabian conqueror built upon this barren rock the city of Ormus, which afterwards became the capital of an empire, comprehending a considerable part of Arabia on one side, and of Persia on the other. Ormus had two good harbours, and was large, populous, and well fortified; its riches and strength were entirely owing to its situation. It was the center of trade between Persia and the Indies, which was very considerable, if we recollect, that the Persians at that time caused the greatest part of the merchandise of Asia to be conveyed to Europe from the ports of Syria and Cassa. At the time of the arrival of the foreign merchants, Ormus presented a more splendid and agreeable scene than any city in the east. Persons

The Portuguese make themselves masters of the Persian gulph.

from all parts of the globe exchanged their commodities, and transacted their business here, with an air of politeness and attention seldom observed in other places of trade.

This affability of manners, introduced by the merchants belonging to the port, soon spread itself among the foreigners that frequented it. Their address, the regularity of their police, the conveniencies and entertainments of every kind which their city afforded; joined to the interest of commerce, contributed to make it the resort of merchants of all countries. The pavement of the streets was covered with mats, and in some places with carpets; and the linen awnings which were suspended from the tops of the houses, prevented any inconvenience from the heat of the sun. Indian cabinets ornamented with gilded vases, or china filled with flowering shrubs, or aromatic plants, adorned their apartments. Camels laden with water were stationed in the public squares; Persian wines, perfumes, and all the delicacies of the table, were furnished in the greatest abundance, and they had the music of the east in its highest perfection. Ormus was crowded with beautiful women from every country of Asia, who were instructed from their infancy in all the arts of varying and heightening the pleasures of voluptuous love. In short, universal opulence, an extensive commerce, a refined luxury, politeness in the men, and gallantry in the women, united all their attractions to make this city the seat of pleasure.

Albuquerque, on his arrival in the Indies, began to ravage the coasts, and to plunder the towns that belonged to the jurisdiction of Ormus. Though these inroads, which shewed more of the robber than of the conqueror, were naturally repugnant to Albuquerque's character, he thought himself obliged to have recourse to these harsh expedients, to induce a power he was not in a condition to subdue by force, to submit voluntarily to the yoke he wanted to impose. As soon as he imagined the alarm had spread sufficiently to favour his designs, he appeared before the capital, and summoned the king to acknowledge himself tributary to Portugal, as he was to Persia. This proposal was received

received in the manner it deserved. A fleet, composed of ships from Ormus, Arabia, and Persia, came to an engagement with Albuquerque's squadron, who with five vessels destroyed the whole armament. The king, disheartened by his ill success, consented that the conqueror should erect a fort which might command the city and both its harbours.

Albuquerque, who well knew the importance of seizing the present opportunity, carried on the work with the utmost expedition. He laboured as hard as the meanest of his followers; but this spirit of activity could not prevent the enemy from taking notice of the smallness of his numbers. Atar, who, in consequence of the revolutions so frequent in the east, had been raised from the condition of a slave to that of a prime minister, was ashamed of having sacrificed the state to a handful of adventurers. As his talent lay rather in the arts of policy than of war, he determined to repair the ill consequences of his timidity by stratagem. By the arts of insinuation and bribery, he succeeded so far in sowing dissensions among the Portuguese, and prejudicing them against their leader, that they were frequently on the point of taking arms against each other. This animosity, which increased every day, determined them to reembark at the instant they were informed that a plot was concerted to massacre them. Albuquerque, whose spirit rose superior to opposition and discontent, resolved to starve the place, and deprive it of succours, by cutting off all communication. It must certainly have fallen into his hands, had not three of his captains shamefully abandoned him, and gone off with their ships. To justify this desertion, they were guilty of still blacker perfidy, in accusing their general of the most atrocious crimes.

This treachery obliged Albuquerque to defer the execution of his design for some time, which he knew to be not far distant, when he should have all the national troops at his command. As soon as he was appointed viceroy, he appeared before Ormus with so strong an armament, that a debauched court, and an effeminate people, finding it in vain to make any resistance, were obliged to submit. The sovereign of Persia,

Persia, however, having had the confidence to demand tribute of the conqueror, Albuquerque ordered some bullets, grenades, and sabres, to be produced to the envoy, telling him, that *this was the kind of tribute paid by the king of Portugal.*

After this expedition, the power of the Portuguese was so firmly established in the Arabian and Persian gulphs, and on the Malabar coast, that they began to think of extending their conquests into the eastern parts of Asia.

ALBUQUERQUE's first attempt was against the island of Ceylon, which is eighty leagues long, and thirty at its greatest breadth. It was anciently known by the name of Taprobane. We have no accounts transmitted to us of the revolutions it has undergone. All that history relates worthy of remark is, that the laws were formerly held in so high esteem, that the monarch was under the same obligation of observing them as the meanest of his subjects. If he violated them, he was condemned to death; with this mark of distinction, however, that he did not suffer in an ignominious manner. He was denied all intercourse, all the comforts and supports of life; and, in this kind of excommunication, miserably ended his days.

The Portuguese form a settlement at Ceylon.

When the Portuguese landed at Ceylon, they found it well peopled, and inhabited by two nations, who differed from each other in their manners, their government, and their religion. The Bedas, who were settled in the northern parts of the island, where the country was less fertile, were divided into tribes, who considered themselves as so many families headed by a chief, whose authority was not absolute. They go almost naked; and, upon the whole, their manners and government are the same with that of the Highlanders in Scotland. These tribes, who unite for the common defence, have always fought bravely for their liberty, and have never invaded that of their neighbours. Their religion is little known; and it is uncertain whether they have any worship. They have little intercourse with strangers, keep a watchful eye over those who travel through the district they inhabit; they treat them

them well, and send them away as soon as possible. This caution is owing in part to the jealousy the Bedas entertain of their wives, which contributes to estrange them from all the world. They seem to be the first inhabitants of the island.

The southern part is possessed by a more numerous and powerful people, called Cinglaffes. This nation is polite in comparison of the other. They wear clothes, and live under an arbitrary government. They have a distinction of casts, as well as the Indians; but their religion is different. They acknowledge one Supreme Being, and, in subordination to him, divinities of the second and third order; all which divinities have their own particular priests. Among the deities of the second order, particular honours are paid to Buddou, who descended upon earth to take upon himself the office of mediator between God and mankind. The priests of Buddou are persons of great consequence in Ceylon. They are never punishable by the prince, even for an attempt against his life. The Cinglaffes understand the art of war. They know how to take advantage of the natural security their mountains afford them against the attacks of the Europeans, whom they have often conquered. Like all people in arbitrary states, they are deceitful, selfish, and full of compliment. They have two languages; one peculiar to the people, the other to the learned. Wherever this custom prevails, it furnishes priests and princes with a further opportunity of imposing upon mankind.

Both those nations enjoyed the benefits of the fruits, the corn, and the pasture, which abounded in the island. They had elephants without number, precious stones, and the only kind of cinnamon that was ever esteemed. On the northern coast, and on the fishing coast which borders upon it, was carried on the greatest pearl fishery in the east. The harbours of Ceylon were the best in India, and its situation was none of the least of its advantages.

It would seem to have been the interest of the Portuguese to have placed all their strength in this island. It lies in the center of the east; and is the passage that leads to the richest countries. All the ships that
come

come from Europe, Arabia, and Persia, cannot avoid paying a kind of homage to Ceylon; and the monsoons, which alternately blow from different points, make it easy for vessels to come in and go out, at all seasons of the year. It might have been well peopled and fortified with little expence of blood and treasure. The numerous squadrons that might have been sent out from every port in the island, would have kept all Asia in awe; and the ships that might cruize in those latitudes, would have intercepted the trade of other nations.

The viceroy overlooked these advantages. He also neglected the coast of Coromandel, though richer than that of Malabar. The merchandise of the latter was of an inferior quality: it produced plenty of provisions, a small quantity of bad cinnamon, some pepper and cardamon, a kind of spice much used by the eastern people. The coast of Coromandel furnished the finest cottons in the world. Its inhabitants, who for the most part were natives of the country, and had little intercourse with the Arabians and other nations, were the most humane and industrious of all the people in Indostan. To this we may add, that the passage along the coast of Coromandel towards the north leads to the mines of Golconda; besides, this coast is admirably situated for the trade of Bengal and other countries.

Notwithstanding this, Albuquerque made no settlement there. The settlements of St Thomas and Negapatan were not formed till afterwards. He knew that this coast was destitute of harbours, and inaccessible at certain periods of the year, when it would be impossible for the fleets to protect the colonies. In short, he thought that when the Portuguese had made themselves masters of Ceylon, a conquest begun by his predecessor D'Almeyda, and afterwards completed, they might command the trade of Coromandel, if they got possession of Malacca. He therefore determined to make the attempt.

*The Portuguese
conquer Malacca.*

THE country, of which Malacca is the capital city, is a narrow tract of land, about one hundred leagues in length. It joins to the continent towards

wards the northern coast, where it borders on the state of Siam, or, more properly, the kingdom of Johor, which has been separated from it. The rest is surrounded by the sea, and divided from the island of Sumatra by a channel which is called the Straits of Malacca.

Nature had amply provided for the happiness of the Malays, by placing them in a mild healthful climate, where refreshing gales, and cooling streams, allay the fervour of the torrid zone; where the soil pours forth an abundance of delicious fruits to satisfy the wants of a savage life, and is capable of answering, by cultivation, all the necessary demands of society; where the trees wear an eternal verdure, and the flowers bloom in a perpetual succession; where the most delicate and fragrant odours, breathing from aromatic plants, perfume the air, and infuse a spirit of voluptuous delight into all animated creatures. Nature had done every thing in favour of the Malays, but society counteracted her benevolent intentions.

Such has been the influence of a tyrannical government, that the inhabitants of the happiest country in the universe have become remarkable for the ferocity of their manners. The feudal system, which took its rise among the rocks and woods of the north, had extended itself to the mild regions of the *Æquator*, where every thing conspires to promote the enjoyment of a long life of tranquillity, which can only be shortened by a too frequent and excessive indulgence in pleasures. This enslaved nation is under the dominion of an arbitrary prince, or rather of twenty tyrants, his representatives. Thus the despotism of a Sultan has found means to extend its oppressive influence to multitudes, by lodging its authority in the hands of numerous overgrown vassals.

This state of turbulence and oppression gave rise to an universal savageness of manners. In vain did heaven and earth shower their blessings upon Malacca; these blessings only served to make its inhabitants ungrateful and unhappy. The masters let out their services, or rather those of their dependents, for hire, to the best bidder, regardless of the loss that agriculture would

would sustain for want of hands. They preferred a wandering and adventurous life, either by sea or land, to industry. This people had conquered a large Archipelago, well known in the east by the name of Malayan Islands. The numerous colonies that were transplanted thither, carried with them their laws, their manners, their customs, and what is somewhat remarkable, the softest language in all Asia.

Malacca, however, by its situation, was become the most considerable market in India; its harbour was constantly crowded with vessels, either from Japan, China, the Philippine and Molucca Islands, and the adjacent parts of the eastern coast; or from Bengal, Coromandel, Malabar, Persia, Arabia, and Africa. These merchants carried on a safe trade among themselves, or with the inhabitants. The strong propensity of the Malays after plunder at last gave way to a more certain advantage than the precarious success of piratical expeditions.

The Portuguese wanted to have a share in the general commerce of Asia. At first they appeared at Malacca in the character of merchants; but their usurpations in India rendered their designs so much suspected, and the animosity of the Arabians had circulated reports so much to the disadvantage of these conquerors, that measures were taken to destroy them. They fell into the snares that were laid for them; several of them were massacred, and others thrown into prison. Those who escaped retreated to their ships, which got back safe to the Malabar coast.

Though Albuquerque by no means intended to wait for a rupture to afford him a pretence of seizing Malacca, he was not displeased at this incident, as it gave his enterprize an appearance of justice, that might lessen the odium which such a step must naturally have drawn upon the Portuguese name. As an impression so favourable to his views might be weakened by delay, he did not hesitate a moment to take his revenge. The enemy expected a sudden blow; and accordingly, when he appeared before the place, at the beginning of the year 1511, he found every thing in readiness to receive him.

Formidable,

Formidable, however, as these preparations appeared, there was a still greater obstacle, which for some days damped the valour of the Christian general: His friend, Araújo, had been taken prisoner in the first expedition, and the enemy threatened to put him to death the moment he should begin the siege. Albuquerque, who did not want sensibility, startled at the prospect of his friend's danger, when the following billet was brought him: *Think of nothing but the glory and advantage of Portugal; if I cannot contribute towards your victory, at least let me not be the means of preventing it.* The place was attacked and carried, after several doubtful, bloody, and obstinate engagements. They found in it immense treasure, vast magazines, and whatever could contribute to the elegancies and pleasures of life, and a fort was erected there to secure the conquest.

As the Portuguese contented themselves with the possession of the city, the inhabitants, who professed a kind of corrupt Mohammedanism, and were unwilling to submit to their new masters, either retired into the inland parts, or dispersed themselves along the coast. Having lost the spirit of commerce, they relapsed into all the excesses of their violent character. These people never go without a poniard, which they call *crida*. The invention of this murderous weapon seems to have exhausted all the powers of their sanguinary genius. Nothing is more to be dreaded, than such men armed with such an instrument. When they get on board a vessel, they stab all the crew when they least suspect any harm. Since their treachery has been known, all the Europeans take care never to employ a Malayan sailor; but these barbarians, who always made it a rule to attack the weaker party, have now changed this ancient custom, and, animated by an unaccountable resolution to kill or be killed, come in boats with thirty men to board our vessels, and sometimes succeed in carrying them off: if they are repulsed, they have the satisfaction at least of having imbrued their hands in blood.

A people who derive from nature such an inflexible bravery, may be exterminated, but not subdued by force. They are only to be civilized by humane treat-

ment; the allurements of riches or liberty, the influence of virtue and moderation, and a mild government. They must be restored to their rights, or left to themselves, before we can hope to establish any intercourse with them. To attempt to reduce them by conquest, is, perhaps, the last method that should be tried; as it will not only increase their abhorrence of a foreign yoke, but discourage them from entering into any social engagements. Nature has placed certain people in the midst of the ocean, like lions in the deserts, that they may enjoy their liberty. Tempests, sands, forests, mountains, and caverns, are the places of refuge and defence to all independent beings. Civilized nations should take care how they invade the rights, or rouse the spirits of islanders and savages; as they may be assured that they will become cruel and barbarous to no purpose; that their ravages will make them detested; and that disgrace and revenge are the only laurels they can expect to obtain.

After the reduction of Malacca, the kings of Siam, Pegu, and several others, alarmed at a conquest so fatal to their independence, sent ambassadors to congratulate Albuquerque, to make him an offer of their trade, and to desire an alliance with Portugal.

Affairs being in this situation, a Squadron was detached from the fleet to the Moluccas. These islands, which lie in the Indian ocean near the equinoctial, are ten in number, including, as usual, those of Banda. The largest is not more than twelve leagues in circumference, and the others are much smaller.

Settlement of the Portuguese in the Moluccas islands.

It is not known who were the first inhabitants; but it is pretty certain, that the Javans and the Malays have successively been in possession of them. At the beginning of the sixteenth century they were inhabited by a kind of savages, whose chiefs, though honoured with the title of kings, possessed only a limited authority, totally dependent on the caprice of their subjects. They had, of late years, joined the superstitions of Mohammedanism to those of Paganism, which they had professed for a considerable time. Their idolence

dolence was excessive. Their only employment was hunting and fishing; and they were strangers to all kind of agriculture. They were encouraged in their inactivity by the advantages they derived from the cocoa-tree.

The cocoa is a tree, whose roots are so slender, and penetrate so little way into the ground, that it is frequently blown down by the wind. Its trunk, which rises to the height of thirty or forty feet, is straight, of a middling thickness, and every where of the same diameter. It is of so spongy a nature, that it is unfit for ship-timber, or for any building that requires solidity. Its head, or tuft, is composed of ten or twelve leaves, which are large, long, and thick, and are made use of in covering the roofs of houses. From this tuft, which is renewed thrice every year, at the same time arise very large buds, from each of which hang ten or twelve cocoas, which, including their shells, are more than half a foot in diameter. The outer coat of the nut consists of filaments, which are used for coarse stuffs, and ship-cables. Of the next coat, which is very hard, are made small cups, and other domestic utensils. The inside of this shell is filled with a white firm pulp, from which is expressed an oil much used in the Indies. It is sweet as long as it continues fresh, but it contracts a bitter taste when it is kept long, and is then only proper for burning. The sediment that remains in the press affords nourishment for cattle, poultry, and even the lower kind of people in times of scarcity. The pulp of the cocoa contains a liquid which is extremely refreshing, and quenches the thirst of labouring people. This liquor is very wholesome, but has a sweet insipid taste.

When those buds are cut at the extremity, vessels are placed to receive the white liquor that distils from them, which if drawn off before sun-rise, and drunk while it is fresh, has the flavour of sweet wine. It is the *manna of the desert*; and who knows but this miraculous story might have originated in a country still farther east than that of Arabia or Egypt? India, it is said, has long been the nursery of fables, allegories, and religious opinions. Natural curiosities furnish an

ample field for imposture, who is apt to convert any uncommon phænomena into prodigies. The natural history of one country becomes supernatural in another. Facts, like plants, undergo an alteration in proportion to the distance they are removed from the country whence they derived their origin. The doctrines of truth are supplanted by those of error; and the remoteness of times and places, by concealing the occasional causes of false opinions, secures to popular falsehoods the confidence of the ignorant, and the silent acquiescence of the learned. The former are not allowed to entertain even a doubt, and the latter are debarred from offering their conjectures on the subject.

Some are of opinion, that the juice of the cocoa might, at the same time, have served for food to the Israelites, and drink to the Indians. It is certain, however, though it does not melt as manna in the sun, yet it very soon turns sour, and makes good vinegar. When distilled in its highest perfection, it produces a strong brandy; and, boiled with quick-lime, yields a middling kind of sugar. The trees from which this liquor has been extracted bear no fruit, the juices being exhausted which serve to produce and nourish the kernel.

Besides this tree, which is common in all parts of India, the Moluccas produce a singular plant, which they call *sago*. This tree affords a nutriment from its trunk and vital substance, its fruit being a superfluous and useless part. It grows wild in the forests, and multiplies itself by seeds and suckers. It rises to the height of thirty feet, and is about six in circumference. The bark is an inch thick. The inner rind is composed of an assemblage of long fibres, which are interlaced with each other. This double coat contains a kind of sap, or gum, which falls into meal. This tree, which seems to grow purely for the use of man, points out the meal by a fine white powder, which covers its leaves, and is a certain sign of the maturity of the *sago*. It is then cut down to the root, and sawn into scantlings, which are divided into four quarters, for the better extracting of the sap or meal it contains. After this substance has been diluted in water, it is strained thro'

a kind

a kind of sieve, which retains the grosser particles; the rest is thrown into earthen moulds, where it dries and hardens for some years. The Indians eat the sago diluted with water, and sometimes baked or boiled. Through a principle of humanity, they reserve the finest part of this meal for the aged and infirm. A jelly is sometimes made of it, which is white, and of a delicious flavour.

Temperate, independent, and averse to labour, these people had lived for ages upon the meal of the sago, and the milk of the cocoa, when the Chinese, landing by accident at the Moluccas, discovered the clove and the nutmeg, with which valuable spices the ancients were entirely unacquainted. They were soon admired all over the Indies, from whence they were transported to Persia and Europe. The Arabians, who at that time engrossed almost all the trade of the universe, did not overlook so lucrative a part of it. They repaired in crowds to these celebrated islands, and had already monopolized their productions, when the Portuguese, who pursued them every where, deprived them of this branch of trade. Notwithstanding the schemes that were laid to supplant these conquerors, they obtained permission to build a fort. From this period the court of Lisbon ranked the Moluccas among the number of their provinces, and it was not long before they became such in reality.

While Albuquerque's lieutenants enriched their country with the new productions of the east, their general completed the coast of Malabar, which would have taken advantage of his absence to recover its liberty. After his late success, he employed the leisure he enjoyed in the midst of his conquests, in suppressing the licentiousness of the Portuguese, establishing order in all the colonies, and regulating the discipline of the army: in all which he displayed an activity, sagacity, wisdom, justice, humanity, and disinterestedness, rarely to be met with. His good qualities made so deep an impression on the minds of the Indians, that, for a long time after his death, they continued to repair to his tomb to demand justice for the outrages committed by his successors. He died at Goa in the year 1515.

without having acquired a fortune, and in disgrace with Emanuel, who had been prevailed upon to entertain suspicions of his conduct.

The causes of the enterprizing spirit of the Portuguese.

If our astonishment is raised at the number of Albuquerque's victories, and the rapidity of his conquests, how deservedly do those brave men claim our admiration whom he had the honour to command in these expeditions! Did any nation, with so slender a force, ever perform such great actions? The Portuguese, with less than forty thousand troops, struck terror into the empire of Morocco, the barbarous nations of Africa, the Mammelucs, the Arabians, and all the eastern countries, from the island of Ormus to China. With a force in the proportion of one to a hundred, they engaged troops, which, when attacked by an enemy of equal strength, would frequently defend their lives and possessions to the last extremity. What kind of men then must the Portuguese have been, and what extraordinary causes must have conspired to produce a nation of heroes!

They had been at wars with the Moors near a century, when Henry of Burgundy, with several French knights, landed in Portugal, with a design to serve in Castile under the famous Cid, whose reputation had drawn them thither. The Portuguese invited them to lend their assistance against the infidels; the knights complied, and the greatest part of them settled in Portugal. Chivalry, one of the institutions which has contributed so much to exalt human nature, substituting the love of glory for the love of our country, that refined spirit, drawn from the dregs of the barbarous ages, and calculated to repair or lessen the errors and inconveniencies of the feudal government from whence it took its rise, at that time revived on the banks of the Tagus, in all the splendor it had its first appearance in France and England. The princes endeavoured to keep it alive, and to extend its influence, by establishing several orders formed upon the plan of the ancient ones, and calculated to infuse the same spirit, which was a mixture of heroism, gallantry, and devotion.

The

The sovereigns raised the spirit of the nation still higher, by treating the nobility in some measure upon a footing of equality, and by setting bounds to their own authority. They frequently assembled their states general, without which, properly speaking, there can be no nation. By these states Alphonso was invested with the regal authority after the taking of Lisbon; and it was with their concurrence that his successors, for a long time after, exercised the power of enacting laws. Many of these laws were calculated to inspire the love of great actions. The order of the nobility was conferred upon those who had distinguished themselves by signal services; who had killed or taken prisoner the enemy's general, or his squire; or who had refused to purchase their liberty, when in the hands of the Moors, by renouncing their religion. On the other hand, whoever insulted a woman, gave false evidence, broke his promise, or "disguised the truth to his sovereign," was deprived of his rank.

The wars carried on by the Portuguese, in defence of their rights and liberties, were at the same time religious wars. They partook of that fierce, yet enterprising fanaticism, which the Popes had encouraged at the time of the crusades. The Portuguese, therefore, were knights armed in defence of their properties, their wives, their children, and their kings, who were knights as well as themselves. Besides these, they were the heroes of the crusades, who, in defending Christianity, were fighting for their country. To this may be added, that the nation was small, and its power extremely limited; but it is chiefly in little states which are often exposed to danger, that we find that enthusiastic fondness for their country, which is utterly unknown in larger communities, who enjoy a greater security.

The principles of activity, vigour, and a noble elevation of soul, which united in the character of this nation, were not lost after the expulsion of the Moors. They pursued these enemies of their religion and government into Africa. They were engaged in several wars with the kings of Castile and Leon; and, during the interval that preceded their expeditions to India, the nobility lived at a distance from cities and the court, and

and preserved in their castles the virtues of their ancestors, together with their portraits.

Whilst they were meditating farther conquests in Africa and Asia, a new passion co-operated with the principles just mentioned, to give additional energy to the enterprizing spirit of the Portuguese. This passion was Avarice, which however it might animate all the rest for the present, could not fail to destroy their generosity of temper in the end. Adventurers embarked in crouds, with a view of acquiring fortunes, serving their country, and making proselytes. They appeared in India to be something more than men, till the death of Albuquerque. Then riches, which were the object and reward of their conquests, introduced an universal corruption. The nobler passions gave way to the pleasures of luxury, which never fail to enervate the body, and to destroy the virtues of the mind. The weak successors of the illustrious Emanuel, and the men of mean abilities, whom he himself sent as viceroys to the Indies, gradually contributed to the degeneracy of the Portuguese.

Lopez-Soarez, however, who succeeded Albuquerque, pursued his designs. He abolished a barbarous custom that prevailed in the country of Travancor, in the neighbourhood of Calicut. These people consulted forcerers concerning the destiny of their children: If the magician promised a happy destiny, they were suffered to live; if he foretold any great calamities that were to befall them, they were put to death. Soarez interposed to preserve their children. He was for some time to struggle against the opposition with which the Portuguese were threatned in India; and as soon as he was relieved from his anxiety, he resolved to attempt a passage to China.

The great Albuquerque had formed the same design. He had met with Chinese ships and merchants at Malacca, and conceived the highest opinion of a nation, whose very sailors had more politeness, a better sense of decorum, more good nature and humanity, than were, at that time, to be found among the European nobility. He invited

*Arrival of the
Portuguese at
China. State of
this empire.*

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the Chinese to continue their commerce with Malacca. From them he procured a particular account of the strength, riches, and manners of their extensive empire, and communicated his intelligence to the court of Portugal.

The Chinese nation was utterly unknown in Europe. Mark Paul, a Venetian, who had travelled to China by land, had given a description of it which was looked upon as fabulous. It corresponded, however, with the particulars since transmitted by Albuquerque. Credit was given to this officer's testimony, and to his account of the lucrative trade that might be carried on in this country.

In the year 1518, a squadron sailed from Lisbon to carry over an ambassador. As soon as it arrived at the islands in the neighbourhood of Canton, it was surrounded by Chinese vessels, which came to reconnoitre it. Ferdinand D'Andrade, who commanded it, did not attempt to defend himself: he suffered the Chinese to come on board, communicated the object of his voyage to the Mandarines that presided at Canton, and sent his ambassador on shore, who was conducted to Peking.

This ambassador, during his journey from Canton to Peking, was every moment presented with some new wonder, that struck him with amazement. If we consider the largeness of towns, the multitude of villages, the variety of canals, of which some are navigable across the empire, and others contribute to the fertility of the soil, the art of cultivating their lands, and the abundance and variety of their productions, the sagacious and mild aspect of the inhabitants, the perpetual interchange of good offices which appeared in the country and on the public roads, and the good order preserved among those numberless crowds who were engaged in the hurry of business, we shall not wonder at the surprize of the Portuguese ambassador, who had been accustomed to the barbarous and ridiculous manners of Europe.

Let us take a short view of this people. The history of a nation so well governed, is, in fact, the history of man: the rest of the world resembles the chaos of matter

matter before it was wrought into form. After a long series of devastation, society has at length risen to order and harmony. States and nations are produced from each other, like individuals; with this difference, that in families nature brings about the death of some, and provides for the births of others, in a constant and regular succession: but in states, this rule is violated and destroyed by the disorders of society, where it sometimes happens that ancient monarchies stifle rising republics in their births, and that a rude and savage people, rushing like a torrent, sweep away multitudes of states, which are disunited and broken in pieces.

China alone has escaped this fatality. This empire, bounded by Russian Tartary on the north, by the Indies on the south, by Thibet on the west, and by the ocean on the east, comprehends almost all the eastern extremity of the continent of Asia. It is more than eighteen hundred leagues in circumference. It is said to have lasted through a successive series of four thousand years; nor is this antiquity at all to be wondered at. The narrow bounds of our history, and the small extents of our kingdoms, which rise and fall in a quick succession, are the consequence of wars, superstition, and the unfavourable circumstances of our situation: But the Chinese, encompassed and defended on all sides by seas and deserts, are enabled, like the ancient Egyptians, to give a lasting stability to their empire. Since their coasts, and the inland parts of their territories, have been peopled and cultivated, this happy nation must of course have proved the center of attraction to all the surrounding people; and the wandering or cantoned tribes must necessarily have gradually attached themselves to a body of men, who speak less frequently of the conquests they have made, than of the attacks they have suffered; and are happier in the thought of having civilized their conquerors, than they could have been in having destroyed their invaders.

A country where the government is so ancient, must naturally exhibit strong and deep traces of the continued force of industry. The plains have been levelled

led with the exactest care; and, in general, have no greater declivity than is necessary to facilitate the watering of the land, which they consider, with reason, as one of the greatest helps in agriculture. They have but few, even of the most useful trees, as their fruits would rob their corn of its nourishment. There are gardens, it is true, interspersed with flowers, fine turf, shrubberies, and fountains; but however agreeable these scenes might be to an idle spectator, they seem to be concealed and removed from the public eye, as if the owners were afraid of shewing how much their amusements had encroached upon the soil that ought to be cultivated for the support of life. The land is not wholly taken up with parks or extensive forests, which are not near so serviceable to mankind by the wood they furnish, as prejudicial by preventing agriculture; and while they contribute to the pleasure of the great by the beasts that range in them, prove a real misfortune to the husbandman. In China, the beauty of a country-seat consists chiefly in its being in a happy situation, surrounded with an agreeable variety of cultivated fields, and interspersed with trees planted irregularly, and with some mounts of a porous stone, which at a distance have the appearance of rocks or mountains.

The hills are generally cut into terraces, supported by dry walls. Here they have reservoirs, constructed with ingenuity for the reception of rain and spring water. It is not uncommon to see the bottom, summit, and declivity of a hill watered by the same canal, by means of a number of engines of a simple construction, which save manual labour, and perform with two men what could not be done with a thousand in the ordinary way. These heights commonly yield three crops in a year. They first sow a kind of raddish, which produces an oil, then cotton, and after that potatoes. This is the common method of culture, though not adhered to invariably.

Upon most of the mountains which are incapable of being cultivated for the use of man, proper trees are planted for building houses or ships. Many of them contain iron, tin, and copper mines, sufficient to supply

ply the empire. The gold mines have been neglected, either because their produce did not defray the expence of working them, or because the particles of gold, washed down by the torrents, was found sufficient for the purposes of exchange.

The ocean, which, like rivers, changes its bed in a space of time proportioned to its immense body of water; which shifts a step in ten centuries, but whose smallest encroachment causes a thousand revolutions on the surface of this globe, formerly covered those sands which form, at this day, the provinces of Nankin and Teche-kiang, which are the finest in the empire. As the Egyptians checked the course of the Nile, the Chinese have repelled, restrained, and given laws to the ocean. They have re-united to the continent, tracts of land which had been disjoined by the sea. They still exert their endeavours to oppose that over-ruling effect of the earth's motion, which protrudes the ocean from east to west. To the movements of the globe, the Chinese oppose the efforts of industry: and while nations, the most celebrated in history, have, by the rage of conquest, increased the ravages that time is perpetually making upon this globe, they use such efforts to retard the progress of universal devastation, as might appear supernatural, if daily experience did not afford us strong evidence to the contrary.

To the improvement upon land, this nation adds, if we may be allowed the expression, the improvement of the water. The rivers, which communicate with each other by canals, and run under the walls of most of the towns, present us with the prospect of floating cities, composed of an infinite number of boats, filled with people who live constantly upon the water, and whose sole employment is fishing. The sea itself is covered with thousands of barks, whose masts, at a distance, appear like moving forests. Anson finds fault with the fishermen belonging to these boats, for not giving themselves a moment's intermission from their work to look at his ship, which was the largest that had ever made its appearance in these latitudes. But this inattention, to an object which appeared to a Chinese sailor to be of no use, though it was in the way of his profession, is perhaps a proof of the happiness of a people

people, who prefer business to matters of mere curiosity.

The manner of culture is by no means uniform throughout this empire, but varies according to the nature of the soil and the difference of the climate. In the low countries, towards the south, they sow rice, which being always under water, grows to a great size, and yields two crops in a year. In the inland parts of the country, where the situation is lofty and dry, the soil produces a species of rice, which is neither so large, well-tasted, or nourishing, and makes the husbandman but one return in the year for his labour. In the northern parts they cultivate the same kinds of grain as in Europe, which grow in as great plenty, and are of as good a quality as in any of our most fertile countries. From one end of China to the other, there are large quantities of vegetables, particularly in the south, where these and fish supply the place of meat, which is the general food of the other provinces. But the improvement of lands is universally understood and attended to. All the different kinds of manure are carefully preserved, and skilfully distributed to the best advantage; and that which arises from fertile lands, is applied to make them still more fertile. This grand system of nature, which is sustained by destruction and reproduction, is better understood and attended to in China than in any other country in the world. *

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* Meadows are not in much esteem in China. It is computed that a corn-field yields as much straw for cattle as a meadow of the same extent does of hay; and hence it has been inferred, that it is better to have too much corn, and to feed some animals with the superfluity of grain, than that one man should be suffered to die for hunger in view of a heap of forage. Though buffaloes are trained for labour, yet there are fewer oxen and horses there than with us. The ox could serve for the food of man, which must be very considerable in a country where it is shared out in proportion to the greatness and constancy of their labour, but that deficiency is made up by living on fish, herbs, and confections. Horses are extremely convenient for transporting of goods and men; but the numerous canals made throughout all the empire of China, by means of which one river is connected with another, render water-carriage and travelling amazingly easy. In the larger towns, the Emperor and the Mandarins are carried in palanquins by the citizens, who, though free-men, perform, on this occasion, the duty of slaves.

A discerning philosopher, whom the spirit of observation led into this empire, has found out and explained the causes of the rural œconomy of the Chinese.

The first of these causes is their national character, of being one of the most industrious people in the universe, and one of those whose natural constitution requires very little repose. Every day in the year is devoted to labour, except the first, which is employed in paying and receiving visits among relations; and the last, which is sacred to the memory of their ancestors. The first is a social duty, the latter a part of domestic worship. In this nation of sages religion unites and civilizes mankind, and religion itself is nothing more than the practice of the social virtues. These sober and rational people want nothing but the controul of civil laws to make them just: their private worship consists of the love of their parents, whether living or dead; and their public, of the love of labour; and that labour which is held in the most sacred veneration is agriculture.

The generosity of two of their emperors is much revered, who, preferring the interests of the state to those of their family, kept their own children from the throne to make way for men taken from the plough. They revere the memory of these husbandmen, who sowed the seeds of the happiness and stability of the empire in the fertile bosom of the earth; that inexhaustible source of whatever conduces to the nourishment, and consequently to the increase of mankind.

In imitation of these royal husbandmen, the emperors of China become husbandmen officially. It is one of their public functions to break up the ground in the spring; and the parade and magnificence that accompanies this ceremony, draws together all the farmers in the neighbourhood of the capital. They flock in crowds to see their prince perform this solemnity in honour of the first of all the arts. It is not, as in the fables of Greece, a god, who tends the flock of a king; it is the father of his people, who, holding the plough with his own hands,

shows

But this office, which could be done as well by brute-beasts, they do not consider as disgraceful, as a man thereby can get his livelihood.

shews his children what are the true riches of the state. In a little time he repairs again to the field he has plowed himself, to sow the seed that is most proper for the ground. The example of the prince is followed in all the provinces; and at the same seasons, the viceroys repeat the same ceremonies in the presence of a numerous concourse of husbandmen. The Europeans, who have been present at this solemnity at Canton, never speak of it without emotion; and make us regret that this festival, whose political aim is the encouragement of labour, is not established in our climate, instead of that number of religious feasts, which seem to be invented by idleness to make the country a barren waste.

It is not to be imagined, however, that the court of Pekin are actually engaged in the labours of a rural life. The arts of luxury are grown to so great a height in China, that these performances can only pass for mere ceremonies. But the law which obliges the prince to bestow this mark of honour to the profession of husbandmen, has a tendency to promote the advantage of agriculture. The deference paid by the sovereign to public opinions contributes to perpetuate it, and the influence of opinion is the principal spring that actuates the political machine.

This influence is preserved in China, by conferring honours on all husbandmen who excel in the cultivation of the ground. When any useful discovery is made, the author of it is called to court to communicate it to the prince, and then sent by government into the provinces, to instruct them in his method. In a word, in this country, where nobility is not hereditary, but the mere personal reward of merit, and where virtue alone creates a difference in ranks, several of the magistrates, and persons raised to the highest employments in the empire, are chosen out of families of husbandmen.

These encouragements, established by custom, are further seconded by the best political institutions. Whatever is in its nature incapable of being divided, as the sea, rivers, canals, &c. is enjoyed in common, and is nobody's property. Every one has the liberty of going upon the water, fishing, and hunting; and a subject who is in possession of an estate, whether acquired by

himself, or left by his relations, is in no danger of having his right called in question by the tyrannical authority of the feudal laws. Even the priests, a set of men so universally eager to raise contributions on mankind and on their property, have never dared to make the attempt in China. They are indeed prodigiously numerous, and notwithstanding their often assuming the character of mendicants, enjoy very large possessions; but no odious tax was ever laid upon the labour of the people. An intelligent people would very soon discover a fool under a cassock, especially when the alms he received were considered merely as a tribute due to the sanctity of his character.

The smallness of the taxes is still a farther encouragement to agriculture. Till lately, the proportion paid to government out of the produce of the lands, was from a tenth down to a thirtieth part of the income, according to the quality of the soil. This was the only tribute levied in China. The leading men never entertained a thought of increasing it; not venturing to push a point of this nature in opposition to custom and opinion, which determine every thing in this empire. Some emperors and ministers, no doubt, would have been glad to attempt an innovation of this kind; but as such an undertaking would require time, and they could not expect to live to see its success, they did not choose to engage in it. Men of bad principles aim at immediate enjoyment, while the virtuous subject, extending his benevolence beyond the present generation, contents himself with forming designs, and propagating useful truths, without expecting to reap any advantage from them in his own person.

It is but lately that conquest and commerce have introduced new taxes into China. The Tartar emperors have laid a duty upon certain articles of provisions, metals, and merchandise. In short, if we may believe the Jesuit Amyot, customs are established there as well as in Europe.

It were to be wished that the Europeans would imitate the Chinese in the mode of levying their taxes; which is just, humane, and not expensive. Every year, at the time of harvest, the fields are measured, and
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rated in proportion to their actual produce. Whether the Chinese are as dishonest as they are represented, or whether they are only faithless and deceitful in their dealings with strangers, as several nations among the ancients, I shall not take upon me to determine; but it should seem that government reposes considerable confidence in them, as they are not teized and molested by those searchings and troublesome visits so common in the mode of taxation in Europe. The only penalty inflicted on persons liable to be taxed, and who are too slow in the payment of the tribute demanded by the public, is to quarter old, infirm, and poor people upon them, to be maintained at their expence till they have discharged the debt due to government. This manner of proceeding has a tendency to awaken pity and humanity in the breast of a citizen, when he sees miserable objects, and hears the cries of hunger; instead of giving disgust, and exciting his resentment by forcible seizures, and the menaces of an insolent soldiery, who come to live at discretion in a house exposed to the numberless extortions of the exchequer.

The Chinese never have recourse to those oppressive methods of levying taxes that are practised in Europe. The mandarins take the tenth part of the produce of the earth in kind. The officers in the municipal towns give in their account of this tribute, and all other taxes, to the receiver-general of the province; and the whole is lodged by him in the public treasury. The use that is made of this revenue prevents all frauds in collecting it; as it is well known, that a part of these duties is allotted for the maintenance of the magistrates and soldiers. The money arising from the sale of this proportion of the product of the lands, is never issued from the exchequer but on public exigencies. It is laid up in the magazines against times of scarcity, when the people receive what they lent, as it were, in times of plenty.

One would naturally imagine, that a nation enjoying so many advantages would be extremely populous; especially in a climate, where, whatever reason may be assigned for it, the women are remarkably prolific, and the men do no injury to the natural vigour of
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their constitution by the use of strong liquors; where the weather is wholesome and temperate, and few children die in proportion to the numbers born; where the soil overpays the labour of cultivating it, not to mention their simple and plain manner of living, which is regulated by the strictest œconomy.

The Jesuits, however, who were employed by the court of Peking to make charts of the empire, in the course of their undertaking, discovered some considerable tracts of desert land, which had escaped the notice of the merchants who frequented only the seaports, and of travellers who went only by the road of Canton to the capital.

The want of population, in some countries remote from China, would be altogether unaccountable, if it were not known, that, in these extensive states, a great number of children are destroyed immediately after they are born; that several of those who escape this cruel fate suffer the most shameful mutilation; and of those who are not thus barbarously robbed of their sex, many are reduced to a state of slavery, and deprived of the comforts of marriage by tyrannical masters; that polygamy, so contrary to reason, and the spirit of society, is universally practised; that the vice which nature rejects with the utmost abhorrence, is very common; and that the convents of the Bonzes contain little less than a million of persons devoted to celibacy.

But if a few scattered Cantons, which are hardly known even in China, be destitute of hands to cultivate them; are there not many more in which men are assembled in such numbers as to incommode each other? This inconvenience is observable in the neighbourhood of great cities and public roads, and particularly in the southern provinces. Accordingly it appears, by the records of the empire, that a bad harvest has seldom failed to produce an insurrection.

We need go no further to find the reasons which prevent despotism from making any advances in China. It is evident, from these frequent revolutions, that the people are fully sensible, that a regard to the rights of property, and submission to the laws, are duties of a lower

lower class, subordinate to the original rights of nature, and that communities are formed for the common benefit of those who enter into them. Accordingly, when the more immediate necessities of life fail, the Chinese cease to acknowledge an authority which does not provide for their subsistence. The right of kings is founded on the regard they pay to the preservation of the people. Neither religion nor morality teach any other doctrine in China.

The Emperor is well aware, that he presides over a people who submit to the laws no longer than while they promote their happiness. He is sensible, that if the spirit of tyranny, which is so common and infectious in other countries, should seize him but for a moment, such a violent opposition would be raised, that he would be driven from the throne. Accordingly, finding himself invested with the supreme authority by a people who observe and criticise his conduct, he is far from setting himself up as a religious phantom, and acting just as he pleases. He does not violate the sacred contract, by virtue of which he holds the sceptre. He is convinced that the people are so well acquainted with their rights, and the manner of defending them, that whenever a province complains of the mandarin that governs it, he recalls him without examination, and delivers him up to a tribunal, which proceeds against him if he is in fault; but, should he even prove innocent, he is not re-instated in his employment, as it is deemed a crime to have drawn upon himself the resentment of the people: he is considered as an ignorant tutor, who deprives a father of the affections of his children. This compliance, which in other countries would nourish perpetual discord, and occasion an infinite number of intrigues, is not attended with any inconvenience in China, where the inhabitants are naturally disposed to be mild and just; and the constitution of the state is so ordered, that its delegates have seldom any rigorous commands to execute.

The necessity of justice in the prince tends to make him more wise and intelligent. He is in China what one would gladly believe princes in all countries were, the idol of his people. It would seem, that their man-
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ners and laws conspired to establish this fundamental principle, that China is a family of which the Emperor is the patriarch. He does not possess his authority as a conqueror, or a legislator, but as a father; as a father he governs, rewards, and punishes. This pleasing sentiment gives him a greater power than the tyrants of other nations can possibly derive from the number of their troops, or the artifices of their ministers. It is not to be imagined what esteem and affection the Chinese have for their Emperor, or, as they express it, their common, their universal father.

This public worship is founded upon that which is established by private education. In China, the father and mother claim an absolute right over their children at every period of life, even when raised to the highest dignity. Paternal authority, and filial affection, are the sources of every thing in this empire; by this the manners are regulated, and it is the grand tie that unites the prince to his subjects, the subjects to their prince, and citizens to one another. The Chinese government has gradually arrived at that point of perfection from which all others seem to have finally and irrevocably degenerated; I mean the patriarchal government, a government established by nature itself.

Notwithstanding this sublime system of morals, that for so many ages has contributed to the prosperity of the Chinese empire, it would probably have experienced an insensible change, if the chimerical distinctions allowed to birth had not destroyed that primitive equality established by nature among mankind, and which ought only to give place to superior abilities, and superior merit. In all the states of Europe, one class of men assume from their infancy a pre-eminence independent of their moral character. They are approached with a kind of awe from the moment of their birth; and, in their infancy, suck in the ideas of absolute command; they soon learn to consider themselves as a distinct species, and, being secure of a certain rank and station, take no pains to make themselves worthy of it.

This system, to which we owe so many indifferent ministers, ignorant magistrates, and bad generals, has

no existence in China, where nobility does not descend by hereditary right. The rank of every citizen begins and ends with himself. The son of the prime minister of the empire has no advantages at the moment of his birth, but those he may have derived from nature. The rank of nobility is sometimes conferred upon the ancestors of a man who has done signal services to his country; but this mark of distinction, which is merely personal, dies with its possessor; and his children derive no other advantages from it than the memory and example of his virtues.

In consequence of this perfect equality, the Chinese are enabled to establish an uniform system of education, and to inculcate correspondent principles. It is no difficult task to persuade men, who are upon an equal footing by birth, that they are all brethren. This opinion gives them every advantage; whereas, if a contrary idea prevailed, it would be attended with the most pernicious consequences. A Chinese, who should abstract himself from this common fraternity, would become a solitary and miserable being, and wander as a stranger in the heart of his country.

Instead of those frivolous distinctions which are allotted to birth in almost every other country, the Chinese substitute real ones, founded entirely on personal merit. A set of wise and intelligent men, who are honoured with the title of the *learned mandarins*, devote themselves to the study of all sciences necessary to qualify them for the administration of public affairs. None can be admitted into this respectable society, who are not recommended by their talents and knowledge; for riches give no claim to this honour. The mandarins have the choice of their own members; and this election is always the result of a previous and strict examination. There are different classes of mandarins, the succession to which is regulated by merit, and not by seniority.

Out of the class of mandarins, the Emperor, according to a custom as ancient as the empire, elects ministers, magistrates, governors of provinces, and officers of every denomination, who are called to any employment in the state. As his choice can only fall upon men of tried abilities, the welfare of the people is always

ways lodged in the hands of those who are worthy of such a trust.

In consequence of this institution, no dignity is hereditary except that of the crown; and even that does not always descend to the eldest son, but to him whom the Emperor and the council of mandarins judge most worthy. By this means, a spirit of emulation for glory and virtue is excited even in the imperial family. The throne is given to merit alone, and it is assigned to the heir only in consideration of his abilities. The emperors rather choose to appoint a successor from a different family, than to intrust the reins of government to unskilful hands.

The viceroys and magistrates enjoy the affection of the people, at the same time that they partake of the authority of the sovereign; and any mistakes in their administration meet with the same indulgence that is shown to those of the Emperor himself. They have not that tendency to sedition which prevails in this part of the world. In China there is no set of men to form or manage a faction; as the mandarins have no rich and powerful family-connections, they can derive no support but from the crown, and their own prudence. They are trained up in a way of thinking that inspires humanity, the love of order, beneficence, and respect for the laws. They take pains to inculcate these sentiments into the people, and secure their attachment to every law, by shewing them its useful tendency. The sovereign passes no edict that does not convey some moral or political instruction. The people necessarily become acquainted with their interests, and the measures taken by government to promote them; and the better informed they are, the more likely they will be to remain quiet.

Superstition, which excites disturbances in all other countries, and either establishes tyranny, or overthrows government, has no influence in China. It is tolerated, injudiciously perhaps, by the laws; but never makes laws itself. No person can have any share in the government who does not belong to the classes of literati, which admits of no superstition. The Bonzes are not allowed to ground the duties of morality upon the

the doctrines of their sects, nor consequently to dispense with them. If they impose upon some part of the nation, their artifices do not affect those whose example and authority are of the greatest importance to the state.

Confucius, in whose actions and discourses precept was joined to example, and whose memory and doctrine are equally embraced and revered by all classes and sects whatsoever, was the founder of the national religion of China. His code contains a system of natural law, which ought to be the ground-work of all religions, the rule of society, and standard of all governments. He taught, that reason was an emanation of the Deity; and that the supreme law consisted in the harmony between nature and reason. The religion that runs in opposition to these two guides of human life comes not from heaven.

As the Chinese have no term for God, they say that heaven is God. *But*, says the Emperor Chang-chi, in an edict published in 1710, *It is not to the visible and material heaven that we offer our sacrifices, but to the Lord of Heaven.* Thus atheism, though not uncommon in China, is not publicly professed. It is neither the characteristic of a sect, nor an object of persecution, but is tolerated as well as superstition.

The Emperor, who is sole pontiff, is likewise the judge in matters of religion; but as the national worship was made for the government, not the government for it, and as both were designed to be subservient to the ends of society, it is neither the interest nor inclination of the sovereign, to employ the two-fold authority lodged in his hands for the purposes of oppression. If, on the one hand, the doctrines and ceremonies of the hierarchy do not prevent the prince from making an ill use of absolute authority, he is more powerfully restrained, on the other, by the general influence of the national manners.

Any attempt to change these manners would be attended with the greatest difficulty, because they are inculcated by a mode of education the best, perhaps, we are acquainted with. They do not make a point of instructing their children till they are five years old. They

They are then taught to write words, or hieroglyphics, which represent sensible objects, of which, at the same time, they endeavour to give them clear ideas. Afterwards their memory is stored with sententious verses containing precepts of morality, which they are taught to reduce to practice. As they advance in years, they are instructed in the philosophy of Confucius. This is the manner of education among the ordinary ranks. The instruction of those children who are designed for posts of honour is begun in the same manner; but they are sooner initiated in other studies which tend to point out human conduct in the different stations of life.

In China, the manners take their complexion from the laws, and are preserved by common usages, which are likewise prescribed by the laws. The Chinese have a greater number of precepts, relating to the most common actions, than any other people in the world. Their code of politeness is very voluminous; the lowest citizen is instructed in it, and observes it with the same exactness as the mandarins and the court.

The laws in this code, like all the rest, are formed with a view of keeping up the opinion that China is but one great family, and of promoting that regard and mutual affection in the citizens which is due to each other as brethren. These rites and customs tend to preserve the manners. Sometimes, indeed, ceremonies are substituted for sentiment; but how often are they the means of reviving it! They compose a kind of constant homage, which is paid to virtue, and which is calculated to engage the attention of youth. It preserves the respect due to virtue itself; and if it sometimes leads to hypocrisy, it encourages a laudable zeal. Tribunals are erected to take cognizance of transgressions against the customs, as well as to punish crimes and reward merit. Moderate penalties are inflicted upon crimes, and virtue is distinguished by marks of honour. Honour is accordingly one of the principles that actuate the Chinese government; and though it is not the leading one, operates more strongly than fear, and more feebly than affection.

Under the influence of such institutions, one should expect that China would be the country, in the whole world,

world, where men would be most humane. Accordingly the humanity of the Chinese is conspicuous on those occasions, where it should seem, that virtue could have no other object but justice; and that justice could not be executed without severity. Their prisoners are confined in neat and commodious apartments, where they are well taken care of even to the moment when they suffer. It frequently happens, that the only punishment inflicted on a rich man, amounts to no more than obliging him for a certain time to maintain or clothe some old men and orphans at his own expence. Our moral and political romances, form the real history of the Chinese, who have regulated all the actions of men with such an exact nicety, that they have scarcely any need of sentiment: Yet they do not fail to cultivate the latter, in order to give a proper estimation to the former.

The spirit of patriotism, that spirit without which states are mere colonies, and not nations, is stronger, perhaps, and more active among the Chinese, than it is found in any republic. It is common to see them voluntarily contributing their labour to repair the public roads; the rich build places of shelter upon them for the use of travellers; others plant trees there. Such actions, which are proofs of a beneficent humanity, rather than an ostentation of generosity, are far from being uncommon in China.

There have been times, when these generous actions have been more frequent; and others, when they have been less so: but the corruption which occasioned a defection, brought on a revolution, and the manners of the people were reformed. They suffered by the late invasion of the Tartars: they are now recovering in proportion as the princes of that victorious nation lay aside the superstitions of their own country, and adopt the principles of the nation they have conquered; and in proportion as they improve in the knowledge of those books, which the Chinese call canonical.

It cannot be long before we see the amiable character of this nation entirely revived: that fraternal and kindred principle; those enchanting social ties, which soften the manners of the people, and attach them in-

violably to the laws. Political errors and vices cannot take deep root in a country where none are elevated to public employments, but such as are of the sect of the learned, whose sole occupation is to instruct themselves in the principles of morality and government. As long as real knowledge shall be held in estimation, or continue to lead to public honours, there will exist among the people of China a fund of reason and virtue unknown to other nations.

If this picture of the manners of the Chinese should be different from that drawn by other writers, it is not, perhaps, impossible to reconcile opinions so seemingly contradictory. China may be considered in two distinct points of view. If we consider the inhabitants as they appear in the sea-ports, and great towns, we shall be disgusted at their cowardice, knavery, and avarice: but in the other parts of the empire, particularly in the country, we shall find their manners domestic, social, and patriotic. It would be difficult to point out a more virtuous, humane, and intelligent people.

It must, however, be acknowledged, that the greatest part of those improvements, which depend upon complicated theories, are not so far advanced there, as one should naturally expect from an ancient, active, and diligent people. But this riddle is not inexplicable. The Chinese language requires a long and laborious study, scarcely to be comprehended within the term of a man's life. The rites and ceremonies which they observe upon every occasion, afford more exercise for their memory than their sensibility. Their manners are calculated to check the impulses of the soul, and weaken its operations. Too much occupied in the pursuit of what is useful, they have no opportunity of launching out into the extensive regions of imagination. An excessive veneration for antiquity, makes them the slaves of whatever is established. All these causes united, must necessarily have stifled, among the Chinese, the spirit of invention. It requires ages with them to bring any thing to perfection; and whoever reflects on the state in which arts and sciences were found among them three hundred years ago, must

must be convinced of the extraordinary antiquity of their empire.

The low state of learning, and of the fine arts in China, may perhaps be farther owing to the very perfection of its government. This paradox has its foundation in reason. Where the study of the laws holds the first rank in a nation, and is rewarded with an appointment in the administration, instead of a post in an academy; where learning is applied to the regulation of manners, or the maintainance of the public weal; where the same nation is exceedingly populous, and requires a constant attention in its learned members to make subsistence keep an equal pace with population; where every individual, besides the duties he owes to the public, which take a considerable time to be well understood, has particular duties arising from the claims of his family or profession: in such a nation, the speculative and ornamental parts of science cannot be expected to arrive at that height of splendor they have attained in Europe. But the Chinese, who are only our scholars in the arts of luxury and vanity, are our masters in the science of good government. They study how to increase, not how to diminish the number of inhabitants.

The Chinese have made very little progress in the art of war. It is natural to imagine, that a nation, whose whole conduct, like that of infants, is regulated by ceremonies, precepts, and customs either of private or public institution, must be pliant, moderate, and inclined to tranquillity. Reason and reflection, while they cherish sentiments like these, leave no room for that enthusiasm which constitutes the hero and the warrior. The spirit of humanity, which they imbibe in their tender years, makes them look with abhorrence on those sanguinary scenes of rapine and massacre, that are so familiar to nations of a warlike temper. With such dispositions, can we wonder that the Chinese are not warriors? They have soldiers without number, but totally undisciplined, except in the single article of obedience, being still more deficient in practice than in courage. In their wars with the Tartars, the Chinese knew not how to fight, and only stood to be killed.

Their attachment to their government, their country, and their laws, may supply the want of a warlike spirit, but will never supply the want of good arms, and military skill. When a nation has found the art of subduing its conquerors by its manners, it has no occasion to overcome its enemies by force of arms.

Such is the empire of China so much talked of, and so little known. Such it was, when the Portuguese landed there. They might have learned in it lessons of wisdom and government; but they thought of nothing but enriching themselves, and propagating their religion. Thomas Perez, their ambassador, found the court of Pekin disposed to favour his nation, whose fame had spread itself throughout Asia. It had already attracted the esteem of the Chinese; and the conduct of Ferdinand Andrada, who commanded the Portuguese squadron, tended still farther to increase their esteem. He visited all the coasts of China, and traded with the natives. When he was on the point of departure, he made proclamation in the ports he had put into, that if any one had been injured by a Portuguese, and would make it known, he should receive satisfaction. The ports of China were now upon the point of being opened to them: Thomas Perez was just about concluding a treaty, when Simon Andrada, brother to Ferdinand, appeared on the coasts with a fresh squadron. This commander treated the Chinese in the same manner as the Portuguese had for some time treated all the people of Asia. He built a fort, without permission, in the island of Taman, from whence he took opportunities of pillaging, and extorting money from all the ships bound from or to the ports of China. He carried off young girls from the coast; he seized upon Chinese men, and made them slaves; he gave himself up to the most licentious acts of piracy, and the most shameful dissoluteness. The sailors and soldiers under his command followed his example. The Chinese, enraged at these violences, fitted out a large fleet: The Portuguese defended themselves courageously, and escaped by making their way through the enemy's fleet. The Emperor imprisoned Thomas Perez, who died in confinement, and the Portuguese

Portuguese nation was banished from China for some years; after this the Chinese relaxed, and gave permission to the Portuguese to trade at the port of Sancian, to which place they brought gold from Africa, spices from the Moluccas, and from the island of Ceylon, elephants teeth, and some precious stones. In return they took silks of every kind, china, gums, medicinal herbs, and tea, which is since become so necessary a commodity to the northern nations of Europe.

The Portuguese contented themselves with the sheds and offices they had at Sancian, and the liberty granted to their trade by the Chinese government, till an opportunity offered of establishing themselves upon a footing more solid, and less dependent upon the mandarins, who had the command of the coast.

A pirate, named Tokang-si-loo, whose robberies had rendered him formidable, seized upon the island of Macao, from whence he blocked up the ports of China, and even proceeded so far as to lay siege to Canton. The neighbouring mandarins had recourse to the Portuguese, who had ships in the harbour of Sancian: they hastened to the relief of Canton, raised the siege, and obtained a compleat victory over the pirate, whom they pursued as far as Macao, where he killed himself.

The Emperor of China being informed of the service the Portuguese had rendered him on this occasion, bestowed Macao on them as a mark of his gratitude. They received this grant with joy, and built a town, which became very flourishing, and was advantageously situated for the trade they soon after commenced with Japan.

In the year 1642, a Portuguese vessel was fortunately driven by a storm on the coast of Japan. The crew was hospitably received, and obtained of the natives every thing they wanted to refresh and refit them for the sea. When they arrived at Goa, they reported what they had seen, and informed the viceroy, that a new country, not less rich than populous, presented itself to the zeal of missionaries, and the industry of

The beginning of the Portuguese trade in Japan, the state of the Japanese islands.

merchants.

merchants. Both missionaries and merchants embarked without delay for Japan.

They found a great empire, which is perhaps the most ancient of any in the world, except that of China; its annals are not without a great mixture of fable; but it appears beyond a doubt, that in the year 660, Sin-Mu founded the monarchy, which has ever since been continued in the same family. These sovereigns, called Dairos, were at the same time the kings and the pontiffs of the nation, and, by virtue of these united powers, got the whole extent of the supreme authority into their hands. The person of the Dairos was sacred; they were considered as the descendants and representatives of the gods. The least disobedience to the most trifling of their laws, was looked upon as a crime scarcely to be expiated by the severest punishments; nor were they confined to the offender alone, his whole family was involved in the consequences of his crime.

About the eleventh century these princes, who no doubt were more jealous of the pleasing prerogatives of priesthood than of the troublesome rights of royalty, divided the state into several governments, and intrusted the administration of them to such of the nobility as were most distinguished for their knowledge and wisdom.

By this means the unlimited power of the Dairos suffered a considerable change. The affairs of the empire were left to the fluctuation of chance. The restless and quick-sighted ambition of their viceroys took advantage of this inattention to make a thousand revolutions. By degrees they began to throw off that allegiance they had sworn to preserve. They made war upon each other, and even upon their sovereign: an absolute independence was the consequence of these commotions. Such was the state of Japan, when it was discovered by the Portuguese *.

* The Japanese, in many things, seemed to be more ingenious than even the Chinese. In the art of working their metals, particularly steel, they arrived at a degree of perfection which the Chinese never attained. Their police was nearly as perfect. The government

The great islands of which this empire is composed, being situated in a tempestuous climate, agitated by volcanos, and subject to those great natural phenomena which impress terror on the human mind, were inhabited by a people entirely addicted to superstition, and divided into several sects. That of Xinto is the ancient established religion of the country: It acknowledges a Supreme Being, and the immortality of the soul, and pays adoration to a multitude of gods, saints, or *camis*, that is to say, the souls of great men who have been the support and ornament of their country. It was owing to the influence of this religion that Dairo, the high priest of the gods, from whom also he was descended, reigned over his subjects with all that despotism which superstition never fails to exercise over the minds of men. Being both emperor and high-priest, he has rendered religion, in some respects, useful to his people, which is not absolutely impossible in countries where the sacerdotal and civil power are united in the same person.

It does not appear that the sect of Xinto has had the madness, which of all others is the most dangerous to morality, to fix a criminal stigma on actions innocent in themselves*. Far from encouraging that gloomy fanaticism, and fear of the gods, which is inspired by almost all other religions, the Xinto sect had applied itself to prevent, or at least to moderate this disorder of the imagination, by instituting festivals, which were celebrated three times in every month. They were dedicated to friendly visits, feasts, and rejoicings. The priests of Xinto taught, that the innocent pleasures of mankind are agreeable to the deity; and that the best method of paying devotion to the *camis*, is to imitate their virtues, and to enjoy in this world that happiness they enjoy in another. In conformity to this tenet, the Japanese, after having put up their prayers in the government and manners, however, of the two nations bore no resemblance to each other.

* By what follows, it is pretty evident, that the pious Abbé reckons *wenching* to be one of those actions which are innocent in themselves, and on which it would be madness to fix a criminal stigma.

T.

the temples, which are always situated in the midst of delightful groves, resorted to courtesans, who commonly inhabited these places, consecrated to devotion and love. These women composed a religious community, under the direction of an order of monks, who received a share of the profits arising from this pious prostitution to the dictates of nature.

In all religions, women have had great influence on the worship, either as priestesses, or as victims to the gods. The natural constitution of their sex expose them to singular infirmities, the causes and circumstances of which are often inexplicable and marvellous. Hence it is, that in females, or by females, prodigies chiefly operate; deceit is cherished by their weakness and their vanity; the power of their charms easily imposes upon men, who labour under the double fascination of ignorance and of love. Impostors have never failed to take advantage of these circumstances, and establish their power upon that fondness women have ever shewn for the marvellous, and that foolish fondness men have for the fair sex. Ecstasies, apparitions, terrors, raptures, and convulsions, all originate from the sensibility of the nerves. As it is chiefly after the age of puberty that spasms and vapours begin to discover their effects, celibacy is the best state for exhibiting them in that sex which is most susceptible of such affections. Virginity has accordingly been, in all ages, the period of life most favourable to religion. Devotion easily captivates a heart which never felt a different flame. All marriageable females, who have prophesied, or have seen visions, have uniformly pretended to virginity, and have on that account received the higher respect from both sexes.

All savage nations have their sorceresses, or witches; the antient Gauls had their druidesses; the Romans their vestal virgins, and the southern parts of Europe still boast of their nuns. Among savages, the old women, when good for nothing else, become the nurses of superstition. Among people half civilized, or fully polished, the instruments employed to support religion, are youth and beauty sacrificed to it by public and solemn vows: But what an outrage are these vows, even though voluntary, to reason, to religion, and to humanity?

Whatever

Whatever be the causes, whether religious or politic, which introduced and established monastick celibacy in Europe, we ought not to pass severe censures upon institutions of an opposite nature, which prevail in those countries where the air and the climate plead so powerfully in favour of the most ardent of human passions. If it be reckoned a virtue, under the temperate zone, to stifle those passions which animate both sexes to obey the dictates of nature, it surely ought to be esteemed a more endearing and sacred duty, to give way to these inclinations in the burning regions of Japan.

In countries where religion has not been able to extinguish the flames of love, it would perhaps be wise to change the mode of worship*. What a source of gratitude to the Supreme Being, to receive from his hand the first object by whose means we enjoy a fresh existence; a wife, or husband, whom we ought to love; and children, that are produced from a source of delights, in which they shall re-produce and love themselves in their turn! What advantages might not religion derive from these virtues, and these rewards of virtue! but how profane and unnatural must that system be, which represents them as criminal, wicked, and the object of punishment! It is a melancholy reflection, that men should so far recede from the first principles of morality, as to abandon the original feelings of nature! They have searched after the bonds of society, in errors the most pernicious and deplorable. If men needed illusions to enable them to live in amity with one another, why did they not rather derive them from the most agreeable sentiments of the heart? What a moralist or legislator must he be, who cannot discover, in these desires

* What a glorious worship it is, wherein men, animated by the fire of the Divinity, concur, if I may say so, to the continuation of creation, in perpetuating its works, by the immortal pleasures of generation! Let us figure to ourselves beings who, joining by turns in the effervescence of manhood love to love, the ideas of religion to those of the most lively passion that heaven has inspired in mortals, see, feel, breathe God in all their communications, adore him together, invoke him, and associate him to their pleasures, make him palpable and sensible to themselves, by that effusion of souls and senses, where all is mystery, joy, and heavenly favour!

fires which lead to the preservation and increase of his species, the most solid principles of population and of happiness? How I pity those cold, insensible, unhappy, and hardened beings, who consider these sentiments and feelings of an honest heart as the effects of a criminal delirium!

The Budzoists are another sect in Japan, of which Budzo was the founder. Their doctrine was nearly the same with that of the sect of Xinto; over which they hoped to gain a superiority by the severity of their morals. Besides Amida, the deity of the Xintoists, the Budzoists worshipped a kind of mediator between God and mankind. They likewise worshipped other mediatorial divinities between men and Amida. The professors of this religion flattered themselves, that they should prevail over the religion of Xinto by the multitude of their precepts, the excess of their austerity, their devotions and mortifications.

The spirit of Budzoism is dreadful. It breathes nothing but penitence, excessive fear, and cruel severity. Of all fanaticisms, it is the most terrible. The monks of this sect oblige their disciples to pass one half of their lives in penance, for the purpose of expiating imaginary sins; and inflict upon them the greatest part of that penance themselves, with a tyranny and cruelty, of which one may conceive an idea from the inquisitors in Spain; with this difference, that the inquisitors are only the judges of those sins and punishments, which they have themselves devised and invented; whereas the Japanese fathers are themselves the butchers of these voluntary victims to superstition. The Budzoist priests keep the minds of their followers in a continual state of torture, between remorse and expiation. Their religion is so overloaded with precepts, that it is not possible to observe them. They represent their gods as always desirous to punish, and always offended.

It may readily be imagined, what effects so horrible a superstition must have on the character of the people, and to what degree of ferocity it hath brought them. The lights of a wholesome morality, a little philosophy, a prudent system of education, might have remedied

remedied the laws, the government, and the religion, which conspire to make mankind more savage in society with his own species, than if he lived in the woods, and had no companions but the monsters that roam the deserts.

In China, they put into the hands of children, books of instruction, which contain a detail of their duties, and teach them the advantages of virtue. The Japanese children are made to get by heart, poems, in which the actions of their forefathers are celebrated, a contempt of life is inculcated, and suicide is set up as the most heroic of all actions. These songs and poems, which are said to be full of energy and beauty, beget enthusiasm. The Chinese education tends to regulate the soul, and keep it in order: the Japanese, to inflame and excite it to heroism. These are guided through life by sentiment; the Chinese by reason and custom.

The Chinese aim only at truth in their writings, and place their happiness in a state of tranquillity. The Japanese have a quick relish of pleasures, and would rather suffer, than be without feeling. In fine, the Chinese seem to wish to counteract the violence and impetuosity of the soul; the Japanese, to keep it from sinking into a state of languor and inactivity.

It is natural to imagine that people of this character must be fond of novelty. The Portuguese were accordingly received with all possible demonstrations of joy. All the ports were open to them. All the petty princes of the country invited them to their provinces; each contending who should give them the most valuable advantages, grant them the most privileges, and shew them the greatest civilities. These merchants established a prodigious trade. The Portuguese carried thither the commodities of India, which they brought from different markets; and Macao served as a repository for their European goods. Immense quantities of the productions of Europe and Asia were consumed by the Dairo, the usurpers of his rights, the grandees, and the whole nation. But what have they to give in return?

The country of Japan is in general mountainous, stony,

stony, and by no means fertile. Its produce in rice, barley, and wheat, which are the only crops it admits of, is not sufficient for the maintenance of its numerous inhabitants; who, notwithstanding their activity, foresight, and frugality, must perish with famine, if the sea did not supply them with great quantities of fish. The empire affords no productions proper for exportation; nor do the mechanic arts furnish any article of trade but their works of steel, which are the best we are acquainted with.

Were it not for the advantages it derives from its mines, of gold, silver, and copper, which are the richest in Asia, and perhaps in the whole world, Japan could not support its own expences. The Portuguese every year carried off quantities of these metals, to the amount of fourteen or fifteen millions of livres*. They married also the richest of the Japanese heiresses, and allied themselves to the most powerful families.

Extent of the Portuguese dominions in the Indies.

WITH such advantages the avarice, as well as the ambition of the Portuguese might have been satisfied. They were masters of the coasts of Guinea, Arabia, Persia, and the two Peninsulas of India. They were possessed of the Moluccas, Ceylon, and the isles of Sunda, while their settlement at Macao insured to them the commerce of China and Japan.

Throughout this immense tract, the will of the Portuguese was the supreme law. Earth and sea acknowledged their sovereignty. Their authority was so absolute, that persons and things were dependent upon them, and moved entirely by their directions. No nation or private person dared to make voyages, or carry on trade, without obtaining their permission and passport. Those who had this liberty granted them, were prohibited from trading in cinnamon, ginger, pepper, timber, iron, steel, lead, tin, and arms, of which the conquerors reserved to themselves the exclusive benefit. A thousand valuable articles, by which so many nations have since enriched themselves, and which then bore a higher price

* Upon an average, about 634,000l.

on account of their novelty, were entirely engrossed by the Portuguese. In consequence of this monopoly, the price of the produce and manufactures, both in Europe and Asia, were regulated at their discretion.

In the midst of so much glory, treasure, and conquest, the Portuguese had not neglected that part of Africa which lies between the Cape of Good Hope and the Red Sea, and which has in all ages been famed for the richness of its productions. The possession of this country was on many accounts an important object: the Arabians had been settled there for many ages, and their numbers were greatly increased. They had formed along the coast of Zanguebar several small independent sovereignties, some of which made a considerable figure, and almost all of them were in good condition. The flourishing state of these settlements was owing to mines of gold and silver, which they found within their respective territories, the produce of which enabled them to purchase the commodities of India. To possess themselves of this treasure, and to deprive their competitors of it, was looked upon as an indispensable duty by the Portuguese. Agreeable to this principle, these Arabian merchants were attacked, and without much difficulty subdued, about the year 1508. Upon their ruins was formed an empire, which extended from Sofala as far as Melinda, of which the island of Mosambique was made the center. This island is separated from the continent only by a narrow channel, and is no more than two leagues in circumference. Its port, which is excellent, and wants nothing but a purer air, was fixed upon as a place for the vessels of the conqueror to put in at, and as a staple for all their merchandize. Here they were used to wait for those settled winds, which at certain times of the year blow without intermission from the African to the Indian coasts, or at other times of the year they blow in an opposite direction from the coasts of India to those of Africa.

THESE successes, if properly improved, might have formed a power so considerable, that it could not be shaken; but the vices and folly of some of their chiefs, the abuse of riches and of power, the wan-

*Corruption of
the Portuguese
in India.*

tonness of victory, the distance of their own country, had changed the character of the Portuguese. The religious zeal, which had added so much force and activity to their courage, now produced in them nothing but ferocity. They made no scruple of pillaging, cheating, and enslaving idolaters. They supposed that the Pope, in bestowing the kingdoms of Asia upon the Portuguese monarchs, had not withheld the property of individuals from their subjects. Being absolute masters of the Eastern seas, they extorted a tribute from the ships of every country; they ravaged the coasts, insulted the princes, and became, in a short time, the terror and scourge of all nations.

The king of Tidor was carried off from his own palace, and murdered, with his children, whom he had intrusted to the care of the Portuguese.

At Ceylon, the people were not suffered to cultivate the earth, except for their new masters, who treated them with the greatest barbarity.

At Goa they had established the inquisition, and whoever was rich became a prey to the ministers of that infamous tribunal.

Faria, who was sent out against the pirates from Malacca, China, and other parts, made a descent on the island of Calampui, and plundered the sepulchres of the emperors of China.

Souza caused all the pagodas on the Malabar coast to be destroyed, and his people inhumanly massacred the wretched Indians, who went to weep over the ruins of their temples.

Correa terminated an obstinate war with the king of Pegu, and both parties were to swear on the books of their several religions to observe the treaty. Correa swore on a collection of songs, and thought by this vile stratagem to elude his engagement.

Nuno da Cunha would make himself master of the island of Damanag on the coast of Cambaya; the inhabitants offered to surrender it to him, if he would suffer them to carry off their treasures. This request was refused, and Nuno put them all to the sword.

Diego de Silveira was cruising in the Red Sea. A vessel richly laden saluted him. The captain came on board,

board, and gave him a letter from a Portuguese general, which was to be his passport. The letter contained only these words: *I desire the captains of ships belonging to the king of Portugal to seize upon this Moorish vessel as a lawful prize.*

In a short time the Portuguese preserved no more humanity or good faith with each other than with the natives. Almost all the states, where they had the command, were divided into factions.

There prevailed every where in their manners, a mixture of avarice, debauchery, cruelty, and devotion. They had most of them seven or eight concubines, whom they kept to work with the utmost rigour, and forced from them the money they gained by their labour. Such treatment of women was directly opposite to the spirit of chivalry.

The chiefs, and principal officers, admitted to their table a multitude of those singing and dancing women with which India abounds. Effeminacy introduced itself into their houses and armies. The officers marched to meet the enemy in palankeens *. That brilliant courage, which had subdued many nations, existed no longer among them. The Portuguese were with difficulty brought to fight, except where there was a prospect of plunder. In a short time, the king of Portugal received none of the produce of the tribute, which was paid him by more than one hundred and fifty eastern princes. This money was embezzled by those who uplifted it. Such corruption prevailed in the finances, that the tribute of sovereigns, the revenues of provinces, which ought to have been immense, the taxes they levied in gold, silver, and spices, on the inhabitants of the continent and islands, were not sufficient to keep up a few forts, and to fit out the shipping that was necessary for the protection of trade.

It is a melancholy view to contemplate the fall of nations. Let us hasten to the administration of Don Juan da Castro, who restored to the Portuguese some part of their virtue.

Castro

* A *palanquin* is a sort of chair or sedan, much used in the East Indies.

Castro was much enlightened, considering the age he lived in. He possessed a noble and elevated soul; and the study of the ancients had preserved in him that love of glory and of his country which was so common among the Greeks and Romans.

In the beginning of his wise and glorious administration, Cojè Sophar, minister of Mahmoud, king of Cambaya, had inspired his master with a design of attacking the Portuguese. This man, whose father is said to have been an Italian, and his mother a Greek, had raised himself from slavery to the conduct of the state, and the command of armies. He had become a Mussulman; and though he had really no religion, he knew how to avail himself of the aversion the people had conceived against the Portuguese, on account of the contempt they shewed for the religions of the country. He engaged in his service experienced officers, veteran soldiers, able engineers, and even founders, whom he got from Constantinople. His preparations seemed intended against the Mogul or the Patans, and, when the Portuguese least expected it, he attacked and made himself master of Diu, and laid siege to the citadel.

This place, which is situated on a little island upon the coast of Guzurat, had always been considered as the key of India in those times, when navigators never launched out from the coast: and Surat was the great staple of the East. From the arrival of Gama, it had been constantly an object of ambition to the Portuguese, into whose hands it fell at length in the time of D'Acughna. Mascarenhas, who was governor of it at the juncture we are speaking of, should have had nine hundred men, of which he had only three: the rest of his garrison, by an abuse very common in those days, were employed in trade at the different towns upon the coast. He must have surrendered, if he had not received immediate assistance. Castro sent him a reinforcement under the command of his son, who was killed in the attempt. Cojè-Sophar was killed also; but his death did not slacken the operations of the siege.

Castro instituted funeral games in honour of those who fell in defence of their country. He congratulated

ted their parents in name of the government, and received congratulations himself on the death of his eldest son. His second presided at the funeral games, and marched immediately after for Diu, to deserve, as it were, the honours he had just been paying to his brother. The garrison repulsed the enemy in every attack, and signalized themselves every day by extraordinary actions. In the eyes of the Indians, the Portuguese were more than men. *Happily*, said they, *Providence has decreed that there should be but few of them, as there are of tygers and lions, lest they should exterminate the human species.*

Castro himself headed a larger reinforcement than those he had sent. He threw himself into the citadel with provisions, and above four thousand men. It was debated whether they should give battle. The reasons on both sides were discussed. Garcias de Sâ, an old officer, commanded silence; *Ye have all spoke*, said he, *now let us fight.* Castro was of the same opinion. The Portuguese marched out to the enemy's intrenchments, and gained a signal victory. After having raised the siege, it was necessary to repair the citadel. They were in want of money, and Castro borrowed it on his own credit.

At his return to Goa, he wished to give his army the honours of a triumph after the manner of the ancients. He thought that such honours would serve to revive the warlike spirit of the Portuguese, and that the pomp of the ceremony might have a great effect on the imagination of the people. At his entry, the gates of the city were ornamented with triumphal arches; the streets were lined with tapestry; the women appeared at the windows in magnificent habits, and scattered flowers and perfumes upon the conquerors; while the people danced to the sound of instruments of music. The royal standard was carried before the victorious soldiers, who marched in order. The viceroy, crowned with branches of palm, rode on a superb chariot: the generals of the enemy followed his chariot, and after them the soldiers that had been made prisoners. The colours that had been taken from them were carried in procession, reversed, and dragging on

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the ground, and were followed by their artillery and baggage. Representations of the citadel they had delivered, and of the battle they had gained, enhanced the splendor of the spectacle. Verses, songs, orations, bonfires, every thing concurred to render the festival magnificent, agreeable, and striking.

Accounts of this triumph were brought to Europe. The wits condemned it as ridiculous, the bigots as profane. The queen of Portugal said upon the occasion, *That Castro had conquered like a Christian hero, and triumphed like a Pagan one.*

The vigour of the Portuguese, which Castro had re-animated, did not long continue. Corruption made daily advances among the citizens of every class. One of the viceroys set up boxes in the principal towns, in which any person might put memorials and articles of intelligence. Such a method might be very useful, and tend to a reformation of abuses in an enlightened country, where the morals of the people were not totally spoiled; but among a superstitious and corrupt people, it could be of no service.

The original conquerors of India were none of them now in existence; and their country, exhausted by too many enterprizes and colonies, was not in a capacity to replace them. The defenders of the Portuguese settlements were born in Asia; their opulence, the softness of the climate, the manner of living, and perhaps the food, had taken from them much of the intrepidity of their forefathers. At the same time that they gave themselves up to all those excesses which make men hated, they did not retain courage enough to make themselves feared. They were monsters; poison, fire, assassination, every sort of crime was become familiar to them: nor were they private persons only who were guilty of such practices; men in office set them the example! They cut the throats of the natives; they tore each other in pieces. The governor, who was just arrived, loaded his predecessor with arms, that he might strip him of his wealth. The distance of the scene, false witnesses, and large bribes, secured every crime from punishment.

THE island of Amboyna was the first to avenge itself. A Portuguese had, at a public festival, seized upon a very beautiful woman, and, regardless of all decency, had committed the greatest of outrages against her. One of the islanders, named Genulio, armed his fellow-citizens; after which he called together the Portuguese, and addressed them in the following manner: "To revenge affronts of so cruel a nature as those we have received from you, would require actions, not words. Yet we will speak to you. You preach to us a deity, who delights, you say, in generous actions; but theft, murder, obscenity, and drunkenness, are your common practices; your hearts are inflamed with every vice. Our manners can never suit with yours: Nature foresaw this, when she separated us by immense seas, and ye have overleaped her barriers. This audacity, of which you are not ashamed to boast, is a proof of the corruption of your hearts. Take my advice; leave to their repose these nations that resemble you so little; go, fix your habitations among those who are as brutal as yourselves: an intercourse with you would be more fatal to us than all the evils which it is in the power of your God to inflict upon us. We renounce your alliance for ever: your arms are superior to ours; but we are more just than you, and we do not fear you. The Itons are, from this day, your enemies; fly from their country, and beware how you approach it again."

*Decline of the
Portuguese power
in India.*

This harangue, which thirty years before would have brought on the destruction of Amboyna, was listened to with a patience that fully demonstrated what a change the Portuguese had undergone.

Equality detested in every part, they saw a confederacy forming to expell them from the East. All the great powers of India entered into the league, and for two or three years carried on their preparations in secret. The court of Lisbon was informed of them; and the king Sebastian, who, if it had not been for his superstition, would have been a great prince, dispatched

patched Ataida, and all the Portuguese who had distinguished themselves in the wars of Europe, to India.

The general opinion, on their arrival, was to abandon the distant settlements, and assemble their forces on the Malabar coast, and in the neighbourhood of Goa. Although Ataida was of opinion that they had formed too great a number of settlements, he could not bear the thoughts of quitting any of them. *Comrades*, said he, *I mean to preserve all; and so long as I live, the enemy shall not gain an inch of ground.* Immediately upon this he sent succours to all the places that were in danger, and made the necessary dispositions for defending Goa.

The Samorin attacked Manjalar, Cochin, and Cananor. The king of Cambaya attacked Chaul, Daman, Baichaim. The king of Achem laid siege to Malacca. The king of Ternate made war upon them in the Moluccas. Agalachem, a tributary to the Mogul, imprisoned the Portuguese merchants at Surat; The queen of Gareopa endeavoured to drive them out of Onor.

Ataida, in the midst of the care and trouble attending the siege of Goa, sent five ships to Surat, which obliged Agalachem to set the Portuguese, whom he had seized, at liberty. Thirteen ships were dispatched to Malacca, upon which the king of Achem and his allies abandoned the siege. Besides these, Ataida would fit out even the vessels which were employed every year to carry tribute and merchandise to Lisbon. It was represented to him, that instead of depriving himself of the assistance of men who were to go on board this fleet, he should preserve them for the defence of India. *We shall be enough without them*, said he; *the State is in distress, and its hopes must not be deceived.* This reply surprised his opponents, and the fleet sailed. At the time when the place was most rigorously pressed by Idalcan, Ataida sent troops to the succour of Cochin, and ships to Ceylon. The archbishop, whose authority was unlimited, interposed to prevent it. *Sir*, replied Ataida, *you understand nothing of these affairs, content yourself with recommending them to the blessing of God.* The Portuguese, who came from Europe,

rope, exhibited prodigies of valour during this siege. It was oftentimes with difficulty that Ataida could restrain them from throwing away their lives. Many of them would fall out in the night, contrary to his orders, to attack the besiegers in their lines.

The viceroy did not depend so entirely on the force of his arms, as to reject the assistance of policy. He was informed, that Idalcan was governed by one of his mistresses, and that she was in the camp with him. Women who devote themselves to the pleasures of princes, are generally slaves to ambition, and unacquainted with those virtues which love inspires. The mistress of Idalcan suffered herself to be corrupted, and sold to Ataida her lover's secrets. Idalcan was aware of the treason, but could not discover the traitor. At last, after ten months spent in toil and action, his tents destroyed, his troops thinned, his elephants killed, and his cavalry unable to serve, this prince, overcome by the genius of Ataida, quitted the siege, and retreated in shame and despair.

Ataida marched without delay to the assistance of Chaul, which was besieged by Nizamalve, king of Cambaya, at the head of more than a hundred thousand men. The defence of Chaul had been conducted with as much intrepidity as that of Goa. It was followed by a great victory, which Ataida, with a handful of men, obtained over a numerous army, disciplined by a long siege.

Ataida, after this, marched against the Samorin, defeated and obliged him to sign a treaty, by which he engaged never to keep up any ships of war.

The Portuguese became throughout the East what they were under the immediate conduct of Ataida. A single ship, commanded by Lopez Carasco, fought for three days successively against the whole fleet of the king of Achem. In the middle of the engagement, word was brought to Lopez's son, that his father was killed: *We have one brave man the less*, said he; *we must conquer, or deserve to die as he has done*. Saying this, he took the command of the ship, and forcing his way in triumph through the enemy's fleet, anchored before Malacca.

Nor

Nor was courage the only virtue that revived among the Portuguese at this period, so powerful is the ascendent of a great man, even over the most corrupt nations. Thomas de Sofa had got for a slave a beautiful girl, who had not long before been promised to a young man that had been in love with her. He getting intelligence of the misfortune of his mistress, flew to throw himself at her feet, and partake of her chains. Sofa was present at their interview; they embraced, and melted into tears. *I give you your liberty*, said the Portuguese general; *go, and live happy where you please.*

The management of the public money was likewise reformed by Ataida, who restrained those abuses, which are most injurious to states, and most difficult to be corrected. But this good order, this returning heroism, this glorious moment, did not survive his administration.

At the death of Sebastian, Portugal sunk into a kind of anarchy, and was by degrees reduced under the dominion of Philip the Second. From this æra the Portuguese in India ceased to consider themselves as of the same country. Some made themselves independent, others turned pirates, and paid no respect to any flag. Many entered into the service of the princes of the country, and these almost all became ministers or generals; so great were the advantages this nation still maintained over those of India. There was not one among the Portuguese, who pursued any other object than the advancement of his own interest: there was no zeal, no union for the common good. Their possessions in India were divided into three governments, which gave no assistance to each other, and even clashed in their projects and interests. Neither discipline, subordination, nor the love of glory, animated either the soldiers or the officers. Men of war no longer came out of the ports, or whenever they came out were badly equipped. Manners became more and more depraved. Not one of their commanders had power enough to restrain the torrent of vice, and the majority of these commanders were themselves corrupt. The Portuguese at length lost all their former greatness,

ness, when a free and enlightened nation, actuated with a proper spirit of toleration, appeared in India, and contended with them for the empire of that country.

It may be affirmed, that at the time when Portugal first made its discoveries, the world was very little acquainted with the political principles of trade, the real power of different states, the advantages of conquest, the manner of establishing and preserving colonies, and the benefits the mother-country might derive from them.

It was a wise project to endeavour to find a passage by Africa to the Indies, in order to bring merchandise from thence. The benefits which the Venetians derived by less direct roads, had justly excited the emulation of the Portuguese; but it was proper there should be some limits to so laudable an ambition.

This small nation becoming on a sudden mistress of the richest and most extensive commerce of the globe, soon consisted of nothing else but merchants, factors, and sailors, who were destroyed by long voyages. Thus the Portuguese lost the foundation of all real power, which consists in agriculture, natural industry, and population; and there was consequently no proportion between their commerce and the means of keeping it up.

They carried these destructive measures still farther; and, animated with the rage of conquest, extended themselves over a vast tract of land, which no European nation would have been able to preserve, without impairing their own strength.

Thus this small country, which of itself was not very populous, constantly exhausted itself of inhabitants, by sending soldiers and sailors to the colonies.

The spirit of religious intoleration that prevailed amongst them would not allow them to admit into the class of their own citizens the people of the East and of Africa, and they were therefore obliged to be perpetually at war with their new subjects.

As the government soon changed its schemes of trade into projects of conquest, the nation, which had never been guided by the true commercial spirit, soon assumed that of rapine and plunder.

Time-

Time-pieces, fire-arms, fine clothes, and other articles, which have been since carried into India, not being then brought to that degree of perfection they have lately acquired, the Portuguese could not carry any thing there but money. They soon grew tired of this, and carried away from the Indies by force what they had before obtained by purchase.

Then was to be seen throughout the kingdom of Portugal the utmost profusion of riches, joined to the most extreme poverty. The only opulent persons were those who had held some employment in the Indies; while the husbandman, who found no one to assist him in his toil, and the artists, who were unable to procure workmen, being soon compelled to forego their several employments, were reduced to the lowest state of misery.

All these misfortunes had been foreseen. When the discovery of the Indies engaged the attention of Portugal, that court flattered itself that the bare appearance of their ships in that mild climate would insure the possession of it; that the trade of these countries would prove as inexhaustible a source of riches to the nation, as it had been to those people who had hitherto been masters of it; and that by the treasure arising from it, the State, notwithstanding its small extent of territory, would become equal in strength and grandeur to the most formidable powers. There were some, however, who were not misled by these delusive hopes. The most penetrating and moderate of the ministers ventured to affirm, that the consequences of running in search of rich minerals, and glittering merchandise, would be an inattention to objects of real advantage, agriculture, and manufactures; that wars, shipwrecks, epidemical diseases, and other accidents, would weaken the whole empire beyond recovery; that the State, thus carried out from its center by the impulse of an extravagant ambition, would, either by force or art, attract the subjects to the most distant parts of Asia; that even if this enterprize succeeded, it would raise a powerful confederacy, which it would be impossible for the crown of Portugal to defeat. Attempts were in vain made, some time after this, to convince these discerning

cerning men of their error, by shewing them that the Indians were subdued, the Moors repulsed, and the Turks defeated; and by exhibiting the tide of wealth that flowed into Portugal. Their opinions were too well grounded in experience to be shaken by the report of these flattering successes. They still insisted that a few years would discover the folly of pushing these pursuits to extremity, and that they must inevitably lead to a corruption of morals, and end in ravages and universal confusion. Time, the great arbiter of political matters, has since shewn the truth of their predictions.

Of all the conquests which the Portuguese had made in India, they possess none at present but Macao, Diu, and Goa; and the united importance of these three settlements, in their intercourse with India and Portugal, is very inconsiderable.

*Present state
of the Portuguese
affairs in
India.*

Macao annually sends two vessels to Goa laden with china and other goods, that are rejected at Canton; the owners of which are generally Chinese merchants. These ships bring back as much of the santal*, Indian saffron, ginger and pepper, as the two frigates belonging to Goa are able to procure on the southern coast. The vessel which trades to the north carries a part of the cargo that comes from China to Surat, where it takes in some linens, and compleats its lading at Diu, which is not what it was formerly. A ship arrives every year from Europe, which procures at Goa a small and indifferent cargo, consisting of goods picked up from China, Guazarat, and a few English counting-houses, and sells them at Mofambique, Brazil, Angola, or the capital.

Such is the declining state into which the Portuguese affairs in India are fallen, from that pinnacle of glory to which they had been raised, by the bold adventurers
who

* *Santal*, or *sanders*, is a wood used in medicine, and also by the perfumers. This tree is about the height of the European walnut-tree; its leaves resemble those of the lentiscus; its flowers are blue, bordering on black; its fruit of the size of the cherry, green at first, but blackening as it ripens, and of a faint taste. T.

who discovered, and the intrepid heroes who conquered that country. The scene of their glory and opulence is become that of their ruin and disgrace. Their situation, however, is not so desperate as it may appear. Their remaining possessions are more than sufficient to entitle them to a large share in the affairs of India. But this change can only be effected by the aids of philosophy and a spirit of liberty. If the Portuguese knew their true interests, if their ports were declared free, and those who settled in them had their fortunes and the liberty of conscience secured to them, Indians who are now oppressed by their government, and the Europeans who are injured by their monopolizing companies, would resort to their settlements in great numbers; and their flag, which has long been despised, would soon become respectable. Its power cannot, however, be equal to that of the Dutch, a persevering and considerate people, whose enterprizes we are going to relate.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

BOOK

B O O K II.

*The Settlements, Wars, Policy, and Trade of the Dutch in the East-Indies *.*

THE republic of Holland has, from the very time of its origin, afforded a noble spectacle to nations; and cannot fail to be an object of curiosity to latest posterity. The industry and intrepid spirit of the inhabitants

* Germany, to which the several states of Europe are indebted for all the evils in their government; which has destroyed all things, but repaired nothing; which, upon the ruins of the despotism of the Roman republic, has erected anarchy and feudal tyranny: Germany, which, after having overthrown the empire of a nation that conquered the world, suffered herself to be cheated, governed, and plundered, by the ministers of a religion which sprung up from the ruins of Rome: Germany, I say, had, in former times, seven gods, whom they worshipped one day in the week, one after another. The religious homage which they paid them was at first extremely simple. By degrees, however, the use of temples, of idols, and libations was introduced. The persons of their priests were declared sacred; and encroachments of all kinds upon the rights of mankind were the natural consequence of a privilege so dangerous.

All the parts of this vast continent were not governed in the same manner. The people had retained the supreme power in some, the nobles had seized upon it in others. There were also some districts over whom address or force had set sovereigns, some elective, others hereditary. Such, however, was the abhorrence the Germans had of slavery, that, under all these different constitutions of government, they still preserved their liberty.

Having no written law, they were taught the nature of social duties by tradition only. Customs prevailed in place of laws; their pleas were determined upon the principles of simple equity; their differences were decided by common sense. Traitors were hanged; cowards were drowned: all other crimes could be compensated by paying fines, one moiety to the community, the other to the party injured.

In the eyes of this warlike nation, courage was esteemed the first of virtues. They despised dangers; they hated inactivity; nor could they endure to work. Accustomed to consider it as base and cowardly, to obtain that by continual care which they could take by force, they were constantly making attacks upon their

habitants have been conspicuous every where, but particularly by sea, and on the continent of India. Previous to our following their course in that opulent and vast region, we will trace them from the earliest epoch of

neighbours. In every expedition, the chief behoved either to conquer or die; and the soldiers took an oath, not to survive their general.

The infantry left openings in their ranks, which were filled up by cavalry. The horsemen and foot charged together, and the agility of the soldiers was equal to the swiftness of the horses. The offensive weapons of the Germans were a lance and a short sword. For their defense, some had cuirasses, all of them helmets and bucklers. When formed into an armed body, they presented an even, firm, and close front; and their squadrons swam over the most rapid rivers without breaking their ranks. They began the combat with a shower of arrows and darts; and rushed upon the enemy, all in a body, with an impetuosity which was difficult to resist. The main body of their army was inclosed by a great number of chariots, which carried their women. The latter dressed the wounded, gave refreshments to the combatants when exhausted with fatigue, revived their drooping courage, and often, by their animating speeches, obtained a victory when on the point of being lost. A warrior who lost his shield was excluded from their assemblies; and, if he had the misfortune to run away, he seldom failed to punish himself by his own hands. The youth of a city which was at peace, went to some other city engaged in war, in order to partake of its dangers. The glory of a general then consisted in the valour and number of those that accompanied him.

Domestic concerns were committed to the charge of the women and old men. Racing, swimming, hunting, and the pleasures of the table, occupied the whole time of the men. The clothing of the two sexes was very nearly the same. That no restraint might be put upon nature, their children were allowed to go naked even till the age of puberty. By an education so hardy, the body was formed to fatigue. The Germans were tall in stature, and their bodies robust; they could withstand cold and hunger, but could not endure either thirst or heat.

The bond of marriage was sanctified by certain ceremonies. It could not be entered into between two persons without the consent of the friends on both sides. The husband gave for a portion to his wife, a pair of oxen, a harnessed horse, and a suit of armour. The oxen served to admonish the wife of the obedience she owed to her master; the horse, of the obligation she came under to bear a part of his hardships; the armour, of the necessity of her following him to war. If, contrary to the simplicity of manners and modesty natural to the sex, he found her out to be an adulteress, the husband, on whom alone devolved the chastisement of this violation of contract, assembled together the parents of the criminal, stripped her naked in their presence, cropped her hair, and, with a switch, chased her from his habitation. All the affections, all the

of their history. It is of the utmost importance, and highly proper in a work of this kind, as it will comprehend, at one glance, all those characteristic marks by which the genius of a nation is distinguished. It is necessary

the cares of the women, concentrated in the internal oeconomy of their houses; as second marriages were forbidden, and even punished with the loss of their children as a crime.

The Germans were unacquainted with the property of lands. The magistrate distributed them yearly to every family according to their wants, and their allotments were never the same. These continual changes prevented those conveniences and luxuries that would have enervated the body, or blunted the courage, and made personal interest be considered as nothing when in competition with that of the public. At the first rumour of war, one half of the inhabitants took up arms, the other half continued the occupations of peace. The next campaign, every thing was reversed. The soldier became a husbandman, the husbandman a soldier. By this means, battles were not productive of famine, and agriculture had not time to impair their courage.

The food of the Germans was coarse. Their aliment consisted of meat almost raw, and wild fruits. Those who inhabited the borders of the Rhine and the Moselle, drunk wine; the rest were obliged to content themselves with a liquor made of wheat and barley. Their greatest pleasure was that of the table; there they spent days and nights in intoxicating themselves; and this was the time they chose to transact public affairs, being convinced, that copious draughts open the mind and heart. Their entertainments concluded, for the most part, with a quarrel, which never ended without bloodshed.

The hospitality of the Germans was boundless. They were lavish to the stranger that paid them a visit. When their own provisions were done, they carried him to their neighbours, where the same demonstrations of kindness and profusion took place. All that he could desire was given him with cheerfulness; but if he had any thing uncommon or curious, it was asked by way of pledge. Their mutual generosity demanded no acknowledgment for presents. They thought all their favours were too inconsiderable, and had too great generosity of soul, to affix a value, or even a name, to their good offices or services. Liberty would consider herself as injured by this appearance of slavery.

This people had such an itch for gaming, that, after having lost their all, they staked themselves. Thus was independence, which they valued a thousand times more than life, sacrificed inconsiderately to this blind passion; and this is a defect which it is difficult to account for in the manners of ancient nations.

All their riches consisted in horses, arms, and cattle. Their commerce was carried on by barter. Even after they had learned from their neighbours the use of money, they still preferred, for some time, bulk to value, and brass to gold and silver. Usury appeared to them always odious, as they thought it unjust to exact a profit from a thing which of itself could produce nothing. This opinion, the

necessary that a reader who reflects, may be enabled to judge of himself, whether the original state of this nation was such as afforded a presage of its future power; and whether the heroic associates of Civilis, who defied the Roman power, did not transfuse their spirit into those brave republicans, who, under the auspices of Nassau, opposed the dark and odious tyranny of Philip the Second.

Ancient revolutions in Holland.

It is a historical fact, established by the best authority, that in the century preceding the Christian æra, the Batavæ, dissatisfied with their situation in Hesse, settled upon the island formed by the Naal and the Rhine, which was marshy, and had few or no inhabitants. To their new country they gave the name of Batavia. Their government was a mixture of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy. Their chief was, properly speaking, nothing more than a principal citizen, whose office was rather to advise than to command. The principal men who exercised jurisdiction and commanded the troops in their respective districts, were chosen, as well as the kings, in a general assembly. A hundred persons, selected from among the people, presided over every country, and acted as chiefs

precious remains of a happy simplicity, sheltered them completely from several misfortunes, against which the wisest laws have not always secured the most polished nations.

Inheritances went to the natural heirs without being subject to any formality in law. The honour of a family consisted in the number of children, and their greatest misfortune was barrenness. Personal animosities became common among parents; but they were not irreconcilable. Even the crime of homicide could be compensated by a fine, the quantum of which the judges determined.

On feast-days, the youth assembled together, and danced naked to the sound of the fife. They skipt about, with a surprising address, in the midst of spears and swords. Shouts of applause were the encouragement and recompence of those who distinguished themselves in this perilous, but useful exercise.

The funeral-ceremonies of the Germans were as simple as their recreations. The rank of the person was distinguished by the species of wood which composed the funeral-pile. They burnt the horse, the arms, as well as the corpse of the deceased. A mound, covered with turf, was raised above the ashes. The women poured out lamentations, while the men sung the virtues and exploits whereof they had been the witnesses and companions.

chiefs in the different hamlets. The whole nation was, in some measure, an army always in readiness. Each family composed a body of militia, which served under a captain of its own chusing.

Such was the state of Batavia, when Cæsar passed the Alps. This Roman general defeated the Helvetians, several tribes of the Gauls, the Belgæ, and Germans, who had crossed the Rhine, and extended his conquests beyond that river. In consequence of this expedition, the boldness and success of which were equally astonishing, the protection of the conqueror was courted on all sides.

Some writers, too zealous for the honour of their country, affirm that the Batavians at that time entered into an alliance with Rome; but the truth is, they submitted, on condition that they should be governed by their own laws, pay no tribute, and be obliged only to perform military services*.

Cæsar soon distinguished the Batavians from the other nations that were subdued by the Romans. This conqueror of the Gauls, when by Pompey's influence he was recalled to Rome, and refused to obey the senate's orders; when, relying on the absolute authority which his conduct had at length given him over the legions and auxiliaries, he attacked his enemies in Spain, Italy, and Asia; at this juncture, sensible that the Batavians had a principle share in his victories, he gave them the glorious appellation of *the friends and brethren of the Roman people*†.

After this, irritated by the unjust proceedings of certain Roman governors, they obeyed the dictates of that noble impulse, so becoming men of spirit, which prompts

* Coteemporary historians so formally narrate the conditions of the treaty, that it is impossible to refuse their testimony.

† They shewed themselves in the end still more worthy of this glorious mark of distinction. These brave allies accompanied the Roman generals Drusus, Tiberius, and Germanicus, all of whom were successively sent to keep under or subdue the Germans. Their fidelity was so well known, that their island became the ordinary rendezvous of the Roman armies. This harmony was once or twice disturbed by dissensions and open wars; but the manners of the two people so perfectly coincided, that no discord prevailed amongst them till the revolution which changed the face of Europe.

prompts them to take arms to revenge an insult. They shewed themselves as formidable as enemies, as they were faithful as allies; but these troubles subsiding, the Batavians were pacified, rather than subdued.

When Rome, after having risen to a pitch of greatness unknown before, and which has never since been equalled by any state, no longer retained those manly virtues and strict principles which were the groundwork of that noble superstructure; when their laws had lost their force, their armies their discipline, and the citizens the love of their country; the barbarians, who by the terror of the Roman name had been driven to the north, where they had been compelled by force to remain, poured like a torrent into the southern countries. The empire was torn in pieces, and the finest provinces became a prey to those whom the Romans had always either despised or oppressed. The Franks, in particular, seized upon the countries belonging to the Gauls; and Batavia became a part of that extensive and famous kingdom, which was founded by these conquerors in the fifth century.

The new monarchy experienced those inconveniencies which are almost inseparable from rising states, and are indeed too frequently felt in the best established governments. It was sometimes under the dominion of a single person, and, at others, was subject to the caprice of a number of tyrants. It was constantly engaged either in foreign wars, or exposed to the rage of intestine dissensions. Sometimes it made the neighbouring states tremble for their safety; but much oftener suffered from the incursions of the northern people who ravaged its provinces. It was equally the victim of the weakness of several of its princes, and of the unbounded ambition of their favourites and ministers. The overbearing spirit of the pontiffs undermined the power of the throne, and their insolence brought both the laws and religion into disgrace. Anarchy and tyranny followed each other so close, that the most sanguine despaired of ever seeing affairs put upon a tolerable footing. The glorious era of Charlemagne's government was only a transient gleam of light. As his great actions were the effect of his genius, and not in the least owing to the in-

fluence

fluence of any good institutions; after his death, affairs returned to that state of confusion from which they had been retrieved by his father Pepin, and more particularly by his own endeavours. The French monarchy, the limits of which he had extended too far, was divided. Germany, to which the Rhine served as a natural barrier, fell to the share of one of his grandsons; and, by an unaccountable arrangement, Batavia, to which the Normans in their excursions had a little before given the name of Holland, was included in that allotment.

In the beginning of the tenth century, the German branch of the Carlovinians became extinct. As the other princes of France had neither courage nor power to assert their rights, the Germans easily disengaged themselves from a foreign yoke. Those of the nation, who, by virtue of a delegated power from the monarch, governed the five circles of which the state was composed, chose a chief out of their own body. The chief, fearing lest these powerful men might be tempted to throw off their dependence, if any severer conditions were required of them, contented himself with their fidelity and homage, and exacted only such services as they were obliged to by the feudal laws.

At this memorable juncture, the counts of Holland, who, as well as the rest of the provincial chiefs, had hitherto exercised a precarious and dependent authority, obtained the same rights as the other great vassals of Germany: and as they afterwards enlarged their territories by conquest, marriages, and grants from the emperors, they in time became totally independent of the empire. They were not equally successful in their unjust attempts against the public liberty. Their subjects were not to be intimidated by force, cajoled by flattery, or corrupted by largesses. War and peace, taxes, laws, and treaties, were managed by the three united powers of the count, the nobles, and the towns. The republican spirit still prevailed in the nation, when, by some extraordinary events, it fell under the dominion of the house of Burgundy, whose former power, though before considerable, was greatly strengthened by this reunion.

Those who had the sagacity to investigate probabilities,

lities, foresaw, that this state, which was formed, as it were by the gradual accretion of many others, would one day be of great weight in the political system of Europe. The genius of its inhabitants, its advantageous situation, and its real strength, afforded almost a certain prospect of its future greatness. These projects and expectations, which were just ripening into realities, were disappointed by an event, which, though it happens every day, never fails to baffle the designs of ambition. The male line in that house became extinct; and Mary, who was sole heiress to its dominions, by her marriage in 1477, transferred to the house of Austria the advantages that had been gained by several successful struggles, a great number of intrigues, and some acts of injustice.

At this æra, so famous in history, each of the seventeen provinces of the Low Countries had particular laws, extensive privileges, and almost a distinct government. The excellent principle of union which equally contributes to the welfare and security both of empires and republics, was universally disregarded. The people having been, from time immemorial, accustomed to this state of confusion, had no idea that it was possible to enjoy a more rational form of government. This prejudice was of so long a standing, so generally adopted, and so firmly established, that Maximilian, Philip, and Charles, the three Austrian princes who first inherited the dominions of the house of Burgundy, thought it prudent not to attempt any innovation. They flattered themselves, that some happier conjuncture might enable their successors to execute with safety a plan, which they could not even attempt without danger.

*Rise of the
republic of Hol-
land.*

At this time a great change was preparing in the minds of men in Europe. The revival of letters, the extension of commerce, the invention of printing, and the discovery of the compass, brought on the æra when human reason was to shake off the yoke of some of those prejudices which had gained ground in the laborious ages.

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The intelligent part of the world were, for the most part, cured of the Romish superstitions. They were disgusted at the abuse the Popes made of their authority; the contributions they raised upon the people; the sale of indulgences; and more particularly at those absurd refinements with which they had disguised the simple religion of Jesus Christ.

But these discerning people were not the first who attempted a revolution. This honour was reserved for a turbulent monk*, whose barbarous eloquence roused the northern nations. Some of the most enlightened men of the age contributed to undeceive the rest. Some of the European princes embraced the reformed religion; others continued to hold communion with the church of Rome. The former found no difficulty in bringing over their subjects to their opinions; whilst the rest had much ado to prevent theirs from embracing the new doctrines. They had recourse to a variety of measures, which were too often pursued with rigour. That spirit of fanaticism, which had destroyed the Saxons, the Albigenes, and the Hussites, was revived. Gibbets were erected, and fires kindled anew, to check the progress of the reformers.

No sovereign was so ready to make use of these expedients as Philip II. His tyranny was felt in every part of his extensive monarchy; and his zeal for his religion prompted him to persecute all those who fell under the denomination of heretics or infidels. Designs were formed to deprive the inhabitants of the Low Countries of their privileges; and millions of citizens were condemned to the scaffold. The people revolted: and the same scene was renewed which the Venetians had shewn the world many centuries before, when flying from oppression, and finding no retreat upon land, they sought an asylum upon the waters. Seven small provinces lying on the northern side of Brabant and Flanders, which were rather overflowed than watered by large rivers, and often covered by the sea, whose violence was with difficulty restrained by dykes; having no wealth but what accrued from a few

* Martin Luther. T.

few pasture-lands, and a little fishing, formed one of the richest and most powerful republics in the world; and which may, perhaps, be considered as the model of commercial states. The first efforts of this united people had not the desired success; but though they were frequently defeated, they ended with victories. The Spanish troops they had to encounter were the best in Europe, and at first gained several advantages; but by degrees the new republicans recovered their losses. They resisted with firmness; and gaining experience from their own miscarriages, as well as the example of their enemies, they at length became their superiors in the art of war: and the necessity they lay under of disputing every inch of ground in so confined a country as Holland, gave them opportunities of bringing to perfection the art of fortifying a country or a town in the best manner.

The weak state of Holland, at its first rise, obliged it to seek for arms and assistance from every quarter where there was any prospect of obtaining it. It granted an asylum to pirates of all nations, with a view of employing them against the Spaniards; and this laid the foundation of their naval strength. Wise laws, an admirable order, a constitution which preserved equality among mankind, an excellent police, and a spirit of toleration, soon erected this republic into a powerful state. In the year 1590, the Hollanders more than once humbled the pride of the Spanish flag. They had already established a kind of trade, the most suitable that could be to their situation. Their vessels were employed, as they are still, in carrying the merchandize of one nation to another. The Hanse Towns, and some towns in Italy, were in possession of these transports; and the Hollanders, in competition with them, by their frugality, soon gained the advantage. Their ships of war protected their merchantmen. Their merchants grew ambitious of extending their commerce; and got the trade of Lisbon into their hands, where they purchased Indian goods, which they sold again to all the states of Europe.

Philip II. having made himself master of Portugal, enjoined his new subjects in 1594 to hold no correspondence

ence with his enemies. This arbitrary prince did not foresee that this prohibition, which he thought must weaken the Hollanders, would in fact render them more formidable. Had not these discerning navigators been excluded from a port, upon which the whole success of their naval enterprizes depended, there is reason to believe that they would have contented themselves with the large commerce they carried on in the European seas, without thinking of sailing to remote climates. The impossibility, however, of preserving their trade without the productions of the East, forced them to go beyond a sphere which was perhaps too confined for a situation like theirs, and resolved to seek their riches at the fountain-head.

It appeared to be the best plan to fit out ships, and send them to India: but they had neither pilots who were acquainted with the seas, nor factors

The first voyages of the Hollanders to India.

who understood the commerce of Asia. They were alarmed at the danger of making long voyages where the enemy was master of the coasts, and of having their vessels intercepted during a passage of six thousand leagues. It was judged more advisable to attempt the discovery of a passage to China and Japan through the northern seas, which would be shorter as well as more wholesome and secure. The English had made the attempt in vain, and the Hollanders renewed it with no better success.

While they were engaged in this enterprize, Cornelius Houtman, a merchant of that nation, a man of a penetrating and daring genius, being detained at Lisbon for debt, gave the merchants at Amsterdam to understand, that if they would procure his enlargement, he would communicate to them many discoveries he had made, which might turn to their advantage. He had in fact informed himself of every particular relating to the passage to India, and the manner of carrying on trade in those parts. His proposals were accepted, and his debts discharged. The information he gave proving answerable to the expectations he had raised, those who had released him from his confinement formed

an association under the name of the Company of Distant Countries, and gave him the command of four vessels to conduct them to India by the Cape of Good Hope.

The principal object of this voyage, was to observe the coasts, the inhabitants, the productions, and the trade of different places, avoiding, as much as possible, the Portuguese settlements. Houtman reconnoitred the coasts of Africa and Brazil; made some stay at Madagascar, touched at the Maldives, and visited the islands of Sunda; where finding the country abounding in pepper, he bought a quantity of it, together with some others of the most valuable spices. His prudence procured him an alliance with the principal sovereign of Java; but the Portuguese, notwithstanding they were hated, and had no settlement upon the island, created him some enemies. Having got the better in some skirmishes he was unavoidably engaged in, he returned with his small squadron to Holland; where, though he brought little wealth, he raised much expectation. He brought away some negroes, Chinese, and inhabitants of Malabar, a young native of Malacca, a Japanese, and Abdul a pilot of the Guzurat, a man of great abilities, and perfectly well acquainted with the different coasts of India.

The account given by Houtman, and the discoveries made in the course of the voyage, encouraged the merchants of Amsterdam to form the plan of a settlement at Java, which, at the same time that it would throw the trade of pepper into their hands, would place them near the islands that produce more valuable spices, facilitate their communication with China and Japan, and fix them at a distance from the center of that European power, which they had the most reason to dread in India. Admiral Van Neck, who was sent upon this important expedition with eight vessels, arrived at the island of Java, where he found the inhabitants prejudiced against his nation. They fought and negotiated by turns. Abdul the pilot, the Chinese, and, above all, the hatred that prevailed against the Portuguese, proved of service to the Dutch. They were permitted to trade, and, in a short time, fitted out four vessels laden with spices

spices and some linens. The admiral, with the rest of his fleet, sailed to the Moluccas, where he learnt that the natives of the country had forced the Portuguese to abandon some places, and that they only waited for a favourable opportunity of expelling them from the rest. He established factories in several of these islands, entered into treaty with some of the sovereigns, and returned to Europe laden with riches.

It is impossible to describe the joy that prevailed at his return. The success of his voyage raised a fresh emulation. Societies were formed in most of the maritime and trading towns in the low countries. These associations soon became so numerous, that they injured each other; as the rage of purchasing raised the value of commodities to an exorbitant degree in India, and the necessity of selling them made them bear a low price in Europe. They were on the point of being ruined by their own efforts, and by the want of power in each of them separately to resist a formidable enemy, fully bent upon their destruction; when the government, which is sometimes wiser than individuals, opportunely stepped in to their assistance.

In 1602 the States General united these different societies into one body, under the name of the East India Company*. It was invested with authority to make peace or war with the eastern princes, to erect forts, choose their own governors, maintain garrisons, and to nominate officers for the conduct of the police, and the administration of justice.

*Establishment
of the India Com-
pany.*

This company, which had no parallel in antiquity, and was the pattern of all succeeding societies of the same kind, set out with great advantages. The private associations which had been previously formed, proved of service to it by their misfortunes, and even by their mistakes. The great number of vessels which they fitted out had contributed to make all the branches of trade perfectly understood; to form many officers

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and

* Their original funds, though moderate, were however sufficient; and the management was entrusted to sixty directors.

and seamen; and to encourage citizens of repute to undertake these foreign expeditions, in which persons of low rank and desperate fortune only had at first embarked.

So many united assistances could not fail of being improved to advantage, when prosecuted with vigour; and, accordingly, the new company soon acquired a considerable degree of power. It was a new state, erected within the state itself, which enriched it, and increased its strength abroad; but might, in time, weaken the influence of the democratical principle, which inspires the love of equality and parsimony, of the laws, and of one's own countrymen.

Soon after its establishment the company fitted out for India fourteen ships and some yachts, under the command of Admiral Warwick, whom the Hollanders look upon as the founder of their commerce, and of their powerful colonies in the East. He built a factory in the island of Java, and secured it by fortifications; he likewise built another in the territories of the king of Johor, and formed alliances with several princes in Bengal. He had frequent engagements with the Portuguese, in which he had almost always the advantage. In those parts where the Portuguese had appeared in the character of merchants only, he found it necessary to remove the prejudices they had raised against his countrymen, whom they had represented as a set of banditti, avowed enemies to all regal authority, and addicted to all manner of vices. The behaviour of the Hollanders and Portuguese soon convinced the people of Asia which of these nations had the advantage in point of manners. A bloody war soon ensued between these two powers.

*Wars of the
Hollanders and
Portuguese.*

THE Portuguese had, on their side, the advantage of a thorough knowledge of these seas; they were accustomed to the climate, and had the assistance of several nations, which, though they hated them, were compelled through fear to fight for their oppressors. The Hollanders were animated by the critical situation of their affairs; by the hopes of pro-
curing

curing an absolute and lasting independency, which at present they could not boast of; by the ambition of establishing a vast commerce upon the ruins of that of their old masters; and by the hatred which a difference in religious opinions had rendered implacable. These passions, at the same time that they inspired all the activity, strength, and perseverance necessary for the execution of great designs, did not hinder them from taking their measures with precaution. Their humanity and honesty attached the people to their cause; and many of them soon declared against their ancient oppressors.

The Hollanders were continually sending over fresh colonists, ships, and troops, while the Portuguese were left without any force but their own. Spain neglected to send them any fleets of merchant-men, or grant them the protection of the squadron which had hitherto been kept in India: she neither repaired their places of strength, or renewed their garrisons. It should seem, that she wanted to humble her new subjects, whom she thought not so submissive as might be wished; and to perpetuate her authority, by exposing them to repeated losses. She proceeded still further; and, to prevent the Portuguese from deriving any succours from home, seized upon the inhabitants, and sent them to Italy, Flanders, and other countries of Europe with whom she was at war.

Notwithstanding this, the scale continued even for a long time; and the success was various on both sides. Nor is this at all surprizing. The Portuguese, on their arrival in India, had nothing to encounter at sea but a few weak vessels, ill built, ill armed, and ill defended; nothing by land but effeminate men, voluptuous princes, and dastardly slaves: whereas those who came to wrest the sceptre of Asia out of their hands, had vessels to board of the same construction as their own, regular fortresses to assault, and to conquer and subdue Europeans, grown haughty by a long series of victories, and by being the founders of an immense empire.

The time was now come when the Portuguese were to expiate their perfidy, their robberies, and their cruelties; and the prediction of one of the kings of

Persia was fulfilled, who asking an ambassador, just arrived at Goa, how many governors his master had beheaded since the establishment of his power in India, received for answer, *None at all.* *So much the worse,* replied the monarch; *his authority cannot be of long duration in a country where so many acts of outrage and barbarity are committed*.*

It does not however appear, in the course of this war, that the Hollanders possessed that daring rashness, that unshaken intrepidity, which had marked the enterprizes of the Portuguese; but there was a consistency and unremitting perseverance observable in all their designs. Often repulsed, but never discouraged, they renewed their attempts with fresh vigour, and on a better plan. They never exposed themselves to the danger of a total defeat. If, in any engagement, their ships had suffered, they sheered off; and as they never lost sight of their commercial interests, the vanquished fleet, while it was repairing on the coasts belonging to some of the Indian princes, purchased merchandise, and returned to Holland. By this method, the company acquired a new fund, which enabled them to undertake fresh enterprizes. If the Hollanders did not always perform great actions, they never attempted useless ones. They had neither the pride nor the vain glory of the Portuguese, who had frequently engaged in war, rather perhaps through the love of fame than of power. The Hollanders steadily pursued their first plan, without suffering themselves to be diverted from it, either by motives of revenge or projects of conquest.

In the year 1607 they endeavoured to open a communication with the ports belonging to the vast empire of China, which, at that time, was cautious of admitting strangers. The Portuguese found means, by bribery, and the intrigues of their missionaries, to get the Hol-
landers

* In effect, the revolution of 1740, which rendered the kingdom of Portugal independent, without making the people free, did not put that state in a condition to repair her losses in Asia, or even to defend herself in that quarter; and, in a little time, of all her conquests, Diu, Macao, and Goa, were the only ones that were left her: so great is the difference between a nation that shakes off the yoke of her kings, and that which only changes her master.

landers excluded. They resolved to extort by force what they could not obtain by intreaty, and determined to intercept the vessels belonging to the Chinese. This piratical proceeding did not answer their expectations. A Portuguese fleet sailed from Macao to attack the pirates, who thought proper to retire. The inequality of their numbers, the impossibility of refitting in seas where they had no shelter, and the fear of losing the character of their nation in the eyes of a great empire, whose good opinion it was their interest to preserve; all these considerations determined them to decline the encounter: but this was only for a short time.

Some years after, the Hollanders besieged Macao, a place of which they had learned the importance. In this attempt they failed; but as they never lost any advantage that could be gained by their armaments, they sent that which they had employed in this enterprize to form a colony in the Pescadore-isles. These are rocks where no water is to be had in dry seasons, and no provisions at any time. These inconveniencies were not counterbalanced by any solid advantages, because the people of the neighbouring continent were forbidden, on the severest penalties, to hold any correspondence with strangers, which might be dangerous, so near the coasts. The Hollanders had determined to abandon a settlement which they despaired of making useful, when, in the year 1624, they were invited to fix at Formosa, and had assurances given them that the Chinese merchants would be allowed full liberty to go there and trade with them.

THIS island, though it lyes opposite to the province of Fokien, at the distance of only thirty leagues from the coast, was not subject to the dominion of the Chinese, whose genius does not incline them to conquest, and who, thro' an inhuman and ill-judged policy, would rather suffer a decrease of population, than transplant their supernumerary subjects to the neighbouring countries. Formosa was found to be a hundred and thirty or forty leagues in circumference. Its inhabitants, if we may judge from their manners and their appearance, seemed to be descended from the Tar-
tars

The Hollanders form a settlement at Formosa.

tars in the most northern part of Asia, and probably found their way through the country of Corea. They lived chiefly by fishing and hunting, and went almost naked.

The Hollanders having without difficulty informed themselves of every particular that prudence suggested, thought it most adviseable to fix their settlement on a small island that lay contiguous to the larger one. This situation afforded them three considerable advantages: they could easily defend themselves, if hatred or jealousy should incline their neighbours to give them any disturbance; the two islands afforded them a secure harbour; and they could easily carry on a safe communication with China during the monsoons, which they could not have done in any other position they could have pitched upon.

The new colony insensibly gained strength without attracting any notice, 'till it rose at once to a degree of consequence that astonished all Asia. This unexpected prosperity was owing to the conquest of China by the Tartars. Thus it is that torrents enrich the vallies with the stores they carry down from the desolated mountains. Above a hundred thousand Chinese, who resolved not to submit to the conqueror, fled for refuge to Formosa. They carried with them that activity which is peculiar to their character; the manner of cultivating rice and sugar, and were the means of drawing thither from their own nation an infinite number of vessels. In a short time the island became the center of all the correspondence that was carried on between Java, Siam, the Philippine islands, China, Japan, and the rest of those countries; and in a few years was considered as the first mart in India. The Hollanders flattered themselves with the prospect of still greater advantages; but fortune deceived their expectations.

A Chinese, called Equam, of obscure birth, whose turbulent disposition had made him turn pirate, had attained, by the strength of his talents, to the rank of high-admiral. He defended his country against the Tartars for a considerable time; but seeing his master obliged to submit, he endeavoured to make terms for himself with the conquerors. He was decoyed to Peking, where

where he was seized, and condemned by the usurper to perpetual imprisonment, in which he is supposed to have died of poison. Coxinga, the son of Equam, saved himself on board his father's fleet, vowed eternal enmity to the oppressors of his family and country, and concluded he should be able to take the severest revenge upon them, if he made himself master of Formosa. He made a descent upon it, and took the minister Hambroeck prisoner.

Hambroeck being appointed with some other prisoners to be sent to the fort of Zealand, to prevail with his countrymen to capitulate, this republican called to mind the example of Regulus; he exhorted them to be firm, and used every argument to persuade them, that if they strenuously persevered, they would oblige the enemy to retire. The garrison being aware that this generous man would, on his return to the camp, fall a sacrifice to his magnanimity, used their utmost efforts to detain him. Their remonstrances were seconded by the tenderest solicitations of two of his daughters, who were in the citadel. His answer was, *I have pledged my honour to return to my confinement: I hold myself obliged to perform my promise. My memory shall never be sullied with the reproach, that, out of regard to my own safety, I was the cause of severer treatment, or perhaps of death, to the companions of my misfortune.* After this heroic speech, he calmly returned to the Chinese camp, and the siege began.

Notwithstanding the fortifications were in a bad condition, and the fort ill stored with ammunition and provisions; notwithstanding the miserable state of the garrison, and the troops sent to repel the enemy had retreated with disgrace, Coyet the governor made an obstinate defence. In the beginning of the year 1662, being forced to capitulate, he repaired to Batavia, where his superiors had recourse to those iniquitous state-intrigues which are frequently practised in all governments. They cast reflections upon his conduct, to prevent any suspicion that the loss of so important a settlement was owing to their own folly or negligence. The attempts made to recover it proved unsuccessful; and the Hollanders were at last reduced to the

the necessity of carrying on a trade with Canton, on the same conditions, and under the same restrictions as other nations.

It may appear somewhat singular, that since the year 1683, when Formosa fell under the dominion of China, no Europeans have ever attempted to form any settlement there, upon the same conditions at least, as that of the Portuguese at Macao. But, besides that the suspicious temper of the Chinese to whom that island belongs gives no room to expect such a piece of complaisance from them, one may venture to pronounce that such an enterprize would be a bad one. Formosa was a place of importance only so long as the Japanese had a communication with it, and its produce was allowed a free importation into Japan.

The Hollanders seemed to be for ever excluded from this empire. After some unsuccessful attempts, they began to despair of getting any footing there; when one of their captains, who was thrown upon the coasts of Japan by a storm in 1609, informed them that the people were favourably disposed towards them.

*Trade of the
Hollanders to
Japan.*

ABOUT a century before this, a revolution had happened in the government of Japan*. A magnanimous people had been made furious by a tyrant. Tyeosama, who from a soldier became a general,

* The Dairo, who was both a sovereign and pontiff, had seen his first general rise up in arms against him, and make himself Emperor. The family of this usurper kept the throne; and the Dairo, formerly the chief of the empire, was now no more than head of the priests. The Curo, or lay-Emperor, paid him all manner of honours, but without allowing him any authority; and, in order to deprive the clergy of all their power, he endeavoured to give the people a relish for the theism and doctrines of Confucius.

While he was employed in discouraging the fanaticism of the national religion, he beheld with regret a new one introduced into Japan. He foresaw, that a religion which was under the direction of a European pontiff, must of course be, sooner or later, an enemy to that of the Dairo, and that it would become the source of discord among his territories: he therefore resolved to abolish it; its votaries were disposed to defend themselves, in consequence of which they were obliged to swim in torrents of blood. Thus, in a despotic empire, when one religion languishes, another springs up in its place; and

ral, and from a general an emperor, had usurped the whole power, and abolished all the rights of the people. Having stripped the Dairo of the little remains of his authority, he had reduced all the petty princes of the country under his subjection. Tyranny is arrived at its height when it establishes despotism by law. Tycofama went still further, and strengthened it by sanguinary laws. His civil legislation was actually a code of criminal prosecutions, exhibiting nothing but scaffolds, punishments, criminals, and executioners.

The Japanese, alarmed at this prospect of slavery, had recourse to arms. Torrents of blood were shed throughout the empire: and though liberty might be supposed to be superior in courage to tyranny, the latter triumphed over it. Tyranny became still more ferocious, when animated by the spirit of revenge. An inquisition, public as well as private, dismayed the citizens; they became spies, informers, accusers, and enemies to each other. An error in the administration of the police was construed into a crime against the state; and an unguarded expression was made high treason. Persecution assumed the character of legislation. Three successive generations were doomed to welter in their own blood; and rebel parents gave life to a proscribed posterity.

During a whole century, Japan resembled a dungeon filled with criminals, or a place of execution. The throne, which was planted upon the ruins of the altar, was surrounded with gibbets. The subjects were become as cruel as their tyrant. They sought, with a strange avidity, to procure death, by committing crimes

and as theism cannot enter into the minds of slaves whom the state renders miserable, nor toleration into the mind of a despot, it necessarily follows, that either the old or the new religion must be exterminated by fire or sword.

The Portuguese, who had brought Christianity with them to Japan, were banished in the 1638, and deprived for ever of a trade from which they drew in gold, even in the last years, eleven millions of our livres, (481, 250 l. Sterling.) Their profits had even been more considerable, while they were the sole carriers of European and Indian toys to Japan, which the Japanese, naturally curious, readily bought with avidity, and for which their keenness to have them made them pay whatever was demanded.

crimes which were readily suggested under a despotic government. For want of executioners, they punished themselves for the loss of liberty, or revenged themselves of tyranny by putting an end to their own existence. To enable them to face death, and to assist them in suffering it, they derived new courage from Christianity, which the Portuguese had introduced among them.

The oppressions the Japanese laboured under afforded the most favourable opportunity for the professors of this new worship to make numerous proselytes. The missionaries who preached a suffering religion, were listened to with attention. In vain did the doctrine of Confucius try to gain reception among a people who bordered upon China. It was too simple, and too rational, to make impression on these islanders, whose minds, naturally restless, were likewise exasperated by the cruel treatment of the government. Some erroneous tenets of Christianity, which bore a considerable affinity to those of the Budzoists, and the penances, equally enjoined by the two systems, procured the Portuguese missionaries several proselytes. But setting aside this resemblance, the Japanese would have chosen to embrace Christianity merely from a motive of hatred to the prince.

If the new religion was discountenanced at court, it could not fail to meet with a favourable reception in the families of the dethroned princes. It added fresh fuel to their resentment: they were fond of a strange God whom the tyrant did not love. Tycofama ruled with a rod of iron, and persecuted the Christians as enemies to the state. He proscribed the doctrines imported from Europe, but this proscription rivetted them more strongly in the minds of the people. Piles were kindled, and millions of victims threw themselves into the flames. The emperors of Japan transcended those of Rome in the art of persecuting the Christians. During the space of forty years the scaffolds were stained with the innocent blood of martyrs. This proved the seed of Christianity, and of sedition also. Near forty thousand Christians, in the kingdom or province of Darima, took up arms in the name and for the name of Christ;

Christ; and defended themselves with such fury, that not a single person survived the slaughter occasioned by persecution.

The navigation, trade, and factories of the Portuguese, were preserved during this great crisis. The court and the people had, however, for a long time, been jealous of them; they had incurred the suspicion of government by their ambition, their intrigues, and perhaps by their secret conspiracies; and had rendered themselves odious to the people by their avarice, their pride, and their treachery. But as the merchandise they brought was grown into fashion, and could not be procured by any other channel, they were not excluded from Japan till the end of the year 1638; when other merchants were in a situation to supply their place.

The Hollanders, who had for some time entered into competition with them, were not involved in the disgrace. As these republicans had never shewn themselves ambitious of interfering with the government; as they had lent their artillery to be employed against the Christians; as they were at war with the proscribed nation; as their strength was not thoroughly known, and they appeared to be reserved, pliant, modest, and entirely devoted to commerce; they were tolerated, though, at the same time, they were subjected to great restraints. Three years after, whether it was that the spirit of intrigue and dominion seized them, or, what is more probable, that no conduct whatever could prevent the Japanese from harbouring suspicions, they were deprived of the liberty and the privileges they enjoyed.

Ever since the year 1641 they have been confined to the artificial island of Desima, raised in the harbour of Nangasaki, and which has a communication with the city by a bridge. As soon as they arrive, their ships are stripped, and their powder, muskets, swords, guns, and even rudder, carried ashore. In this kind of imprisonment they are treated with a degree of contempt which is beyond conception; and can transact no business but with commissaries appointed to regulate the price and the quantity of their merchandise. It is

impossible that the tameness with which they have endured this treatment more than a century, should not have lessened them in the eyes of the nation, who is witness of it; and that the love of gain should have produced such an extreme insensibility to insults, without tarnishing their character.

The chief commodities which the Dutch carry to Japan are, European cloths, silks, spices, printed linens, sugar, and dyers wood. These articles were formerly of considerable importance. In the very year of the Company's disgrace, its returns amounted to sixteen millions *: but the shackles, which from time to time have been imposed upon it, have gradually reduced their once flourishing trade to nothing. The cargo of the two vessels they send annually cannot be sold for more than a million †. They receive in payment eleven thousand chests of copper, at forty-one livres four sols ‡ per chest, which weighs one hundred and twenty pounds. Their expences, including presents and the charge of the embassy they send every year to the emperor, generally amount to two hundred and eighty thousand livres ||, and their profits do not exceed three hundred and ten thousand §; so that if the Company gains forty thousand livres ¶, it is reckoned a good year.

The trade of the Chinese, who, except the Hollanders, are the only foreigners admitted into the empire, is not more extensive than theirs, and subjected to the same restrictions. Ever since the year 1688 they are confined, during the continuance of the sale of their goods, without the walls of Nangasaki, in a kind of prison, which is divided into several huts, surrounded with a palisade, and defended by a good ditch, and a guard placed at all the gates. These precautions have been taken in consequence of a discovery that some works, in favour of Christianity, had been sold, together, with some books of philosophy and morality. The European missionaries had ordered some people of Canton to circulate them, and the desire of gain betrayed them

* 700,000 l.

† 43,750 l.

‡ 1 l. 16 s. d $\frac{1}{2}$.

|| 12,250 l.

§ About 131,627 l.

¶ 1,750 l.

them into a piece of chicanery, which has cost them very dear.

It is natural to suppose, that those who have changed the ancient government of the country into the most arbitrary tyranny upon earth, would look upon all intercourse with strangers as dangerous to their authority. There is the more reason for this conjecture, as the inhabitants are all forbidden, on pain of death, to go out of their country. This rigorous edict is become the fundamental maxim of the empire.

Thus the inhuman policy of the state has deprived it of the only means of acquiring a milder temper, by softening the national character. The Japanese, fiery as his climate, and restless as the ocean that surrounds him, required that the utmost scope should be given to his activity, which could only be done by encouraging a brisk trade. To prevent the necessity of restraining him by punishments, it was necessary to keep him in exercise by constant labour; and to allow his vivacity an uninterrupted career abroad, when it was in danger of kindling the flame of sedition at home. That energy of mind which has degenerated into fanaticism, would have been improved into industry; contemplation would have changed action, and the fear of punishment into the love of pleasure. Instead of leading a detested life, fettered, abused, and maddened by a constant struggle with the severe restraints of law, the Japanese would have been led by curiosity to traverse the ocean, and visit foreign nations. By a frequent change of place and climate he would insensibly have changed his manners, opinions, and character; and this change would have been as happy for him as it is for the generality of people. What he might chance to lose by this intercourse as a citizen, he would gain as a man: but the Japanese are become tygers through the cruelty of their tyrants.

Whatever may be said in praise of the Spartans, the Egyptians, and other distinct nations, who have owed their superior strength, grandeur, and permanency to the state of separation in which they kept themselves; mankind has received no benefit from these singular institutions. On the contrary, the spirit of commerce is

useful to all nations, as it promotes a mutual communication of their productions and knowledge. In a word, if it were useless or pernicious to some particular people, it was necessary for the Japanese. By commerce they would have become enlightened in China, civilized in India, and cured of all their prejudices against the Europeans.

*The Moluccas
submit to the
Dutch.*

THE Dutch had the good fortune to have resources which indemnified them for the loss they had sustained at Japan. They had not yet entered into commerce with these islands, the most remarkable in the torrid zone, when they attempted to secure to themselves that of the Moluccas. The Portuguese, who had long been in possession of them, were obliged to share their advantages with their masters the Spaniards, and at length to give up the trade almost entirely to them. The two nations, divided in their interests, and perpetually at war with each other, because the government had neither leisure nor art to remove their mutual antipathy, joined to oppose the subjects of the United Provinces. The latter, assisted by the natives of the country, who had not yet learned to fear or hate them, by degrees gained the superiority. The ancient conquerors were driven out about the year 1627; and their place was supplied by others equally avaricious, though less turbulent, and more intelligent.

As soon as the Dutch had established themselves firmly at the Moluccas, they endeavoured to get the exclusive trade of spices into their own hands; an advantage which the nation they had just expelled was never able to procure. They skilfully availed themselves, both of the forts they had taken sword in hand, and those they had imprudently been suffered to erect, to draw the kings of Ternate and Tidor, who were masters of this Archipelago, into their scheme. These princes found themselves obliged to consent, that the clove and nutmeg trees should be rooted up in the islands that were still under their dominion. The first of these sceptered slaves, in consideration of this great sacrifice, received a pension of

of 64,500 livres * ; and the other one of about 12,000 †. A garrison of seven hundred men was appointed to secure the performance of this treaty : and to so low an ebb was the power of these kings reduced by war, tyranny, and misfortunes, that these forces would be more than sufficient to keep them in this state of dependence, if it were not necessary to have an eye upon the Philippine islands, whose vicinity constantly occasions some alarm. Notwithstanding the inhabitants are prohibited from carrying on any navigation, and that no foreign nation is admitted among them, the Dutch trade there is in a languishing state ; as they have no means of exchange, nor any silver but what they carry over to pay their troops, their commissioners, and pensions. This government, deducting the small profits, costs the Company 140,000 livres ‡ a-year.

This loss is fully compensated at Amboyna, where they have ingrossed the cultivation of cloves. The tree that produces them is, as to its bark, very much like the olive-tree, and resembles the laurel in its height and the shape of its leaves. It produces, at the extremity of its numerous branches, a prodigious quantity of flowers, which are white at first, then green, and at last grow red and pretty hard. When they arrive at this degree of maturity, they are, properly speaking, cloves. As it dries, the clove assumes a dark yellowish cast ; when gathered, it becomes of a deep brown. No verdure is ever seen under this plant, which is doubtless owing to its exhausting all the nutritious juices of the soil that produces it.

The season for gathering the cloves is from October to February. They shake the boughs of the tree forcibly, or beat down the cloves with long reeds. Large cloths are spread to receive them, and they are afterwards either dried in the sun, or in the smoke of the bamboo cane.

The cloves which escape the notice of those who gather them, or are purposely left upon the tree, continue to grow till they are about an inch in thickness, and these falling off, produce new plants, which do not bear in less than eight or nine years. These cloves, which they

N 3

call

* About 2,821 l.

† 525 l.

‡ 6,125 l.

call mother-cloves, though inferior to the common sort, are not without their value. The Dutch preserve them in sugar, and, in long voyages, eat them after meals to promote digestion; or make use of them as an agreeable remedy for the scurvy.

The clove, to be in perfection, must be full sized, heavy, oily, and easily broken; of a fine smell, and a hot aromatic taste, so as almost to burn the throat; it should make the fingers smart when handled, and leave an oily moisture upon them when pressed. The principal use of it is for culinary purposes. In some parts of Europe, and in India in particular, it is so much admired as to be thought an indispensable ingredient in almost every dish. It is put into their food, liquors, wines, and enters likewise into the composition of perfumes. It is little used in medicine; but there is an oil extracted from it which is in considerable repute.

The Company have allotted the inhabitants of Amboyna four thousand parcels of land, on each of which they were at first allowed, and, about the year 1720, compelled, to plant a hundred and twenty-five clove-trees, amounting in the whole to five hundred thousand. Each of these parcels produces annually, on an average, upwards of two pounds of cloves; and consequently the collective produce must weigh more than a million*.

The cultivator is paid with the cash that is constantly returned to the Company, and receives some blue and unbleached cottons which are brought from Comorandel. This small trade might, in some measure, be increased, if the inhabitants of Amboyna, and the small islands that depend upon it, would have attended to the culture of pepper and indigo, which has been tried with success. Miserable as these islanders are, as they

* Four millions are always reserved in Europe, and two millions in India, to make up for bad crops, and supply the want which shipwrecks, or the not arrival of goods may occasion.

For every ten pounds of cloves the cultivator is paid two florins and eight sols. Had the Company acted with greater justice, and been possessed of better intelligence, they might have been enabled to save 115,000 florins, which the maintenance of their forts and garrisons costs them, over and above the profits they make by the sales of their goods.

they are not tempted by an adequate reward for their labours, they remain in a state of indolence.

The administration is somewhat different in the islands of Banda, which are thirty leagues distant from Amboyna. There are five of these islands, two of which are uncultivated, and almost uninhabited; and the other three claim the distinction of being the only islands in the world that produce the nutmeg.

The nutmeg grows to the same height as the pear-tree. It has a pithy wood, an ash-coloured bark, and flexible branches. The leaves are produced in pairs upon one single stem, and when bruised, emit an agreeable odour. The fruit succeeds the flowers, which resemble those of the cherry-tree. It is of the size of an egg, and of the colour of an apricot. The outer rhind is very thick, and resembles that of our nuts as they hang upon the tree, opening in the same manner when ripe, and discovering the nutmeg covered with its mace. It is then time to gather it, to prevent the mace or flower of the nutmeg from growing dry, and the nutmeg from losing that oil which preserves it, and in which its excellence consists. Those that are gathered before they are perfectly ripe, are preserved in vinegar or sugar, and are admired only in Asia.

It is nine months before this fruit comes to perfection. After it is gathered, the outer rhind is stripped off, and the mace separated from it, and laid in the sun to dry. The nuts require more preparation. They are spread upon hurdles, or dried for six weeks by a slow fire, in sheds erected for that purpose. They are then separated from the shell, and thrown into lime-water, which is a necessary precaution to preserve them from worms.

The nutmeg differs in goodness according to the age of the tree, the soil, the exposition, and method of culture. It is most esteemed when it is fresh, moist, heavy, and when it yields an oily juice upon being pricked. It helps digestion, expels wind, and strengthens the bowels*.

* The Company pay 9 sols per pound for mace, and 1 i-eight sol for each nut; and they are under an engagement to take, on these conditions, all that is furnished them.

If we except this valuable spice, the islands of Banda, like all the Moluccas, are barren to a dreadful degree. What they produce in superfluities they want in necessities. The land will not bring forth any kind of corn; and the pith of the sago serves the natives of the country instead of bread.

As this food is not sufficient for the Europeans who settle in the Moluccas, they are allowed to fetch provisions from Java, Macassar, or the extremely fertile island of Bali. The Company itself carries some commodities to Banda.

This is the only settlement in the East-Indies that can be considered as an European colony; because it is the only one where the Europeans are proprietors of lands. The Company taking it into their heads that the inhabitants of Banda were savage, cruel, and treacherous, because they were impatient under their yoke, resolved to exterminate them. Their possessions were divided among the white people, who got slaves from some of the neighbouring islands to cultivate the lands. These white people are for the most part Creoles, or Mal-contents, who have quitted the service of the Company. In the small isle of Rosising there are likewise several banditti, whom the laws have branded with disgrace; and young men of abandoned principles, whose families wanted to get rid of them: so that Banda is called the *island of correction*. The climate is so unhealthy, that these unhappy wretches live but a short time. It is on account of the loss of so great a number of hands that attempts have been made to transfer the culture of the nutmeg to Amboyna; and the Company were likewise probably influenced by two other strong motives of interest, the great œconomy and still greater security with which they could carry on their trade. But the experiments that have been made proved unsuccessful, and matters remain in their former state.

To secure to themselves an exclusive title to the produce of the Moluccas, which are, with good reason, stiled the *gold mines* of the Company, the Dutch have been under a necessity of forming two settlements, one at Timor, and the other at Celebes.

THE first of these islands is sixty leagues long, and fifteen or eighteen broad. It is divided into several sovereignties, in which there are numbers of Portuguese. These conquerors, who at their first arrival in India had advanced with bold and unconscionable strides, and had pursued a long and dangerous career with a rapidity which nothing could stop; who were so well accustomed to acts of heroism, that they performed the most arduous enterprizes with ease; these conquerors, I say, when they were attacked by the Dutch, when their whole empire, grown too large, and tottering under its own weight, was ready to fall, displayed none of those virtues which had laid the foundation of their power. When they were dispossessed of a fort, driven out of a kingdom, dispersed in consequence of a defeat, they should have sought an asylum among their brethren, and should have rallied under standards that had hitherto been invincible; either to put a stop to the progress of the enemy, or to recover their settlements: but so far were they from forming a resolution so generous, that they solicited some employment, or some pension, from those very Indian princes they had so often insulted. Those who had contracted a habit of effeminacy and idleness above the rest retreated to Timor, which, being a poor island, where no works of industry were carried on, would screen them, they thought, from the pursuit of an enemy intent upon useful conquests. They were, however, deceived. In the year 1613 they were driven from the town of Kupan by the Dutch, who founded a fort there, which they have ever since garrisoned with fifty men. The Company sends some coarse linens thither every year, and receives in return, wax, tortoise-shell, sanders wood, and cadiang, a small species of bean, commonly used by the Dutch on ship-board, by way of variety of food for the crew. All these objects employ one or two sloops, which are dispatched from Batavia: nothing is either gained or lost by this settlement; the profits just answer the expences. The Dutch would have abandoned Timor long ago, if they had not been apprehensive that some active nation might fix there, and avail themselves of the opportunities

*The Dutch
form a settle-
ment at Timor.*

portunities that situation would give them to disturb the trade of the Moluccas. It was the same cautious principle which drew them to Celebes.

The Dutch make themselves masters of Celebes.

THIS island, which is about a hundred and thirty leagues in diameter, is very habitable, though it lyes in the center of the torrid zone. The heats are allayed by the copious rains, and cooling breezes. The inhabitants are the bravest people in the south of Asia; they make a furious onset, but, after a contest of two hours, a total want of courage takes place of this strange impetuosity: the intoxicating fumes of opium, which are doubtless the cause of this terrible ferment, go off, when their strength is exhausted by transports that approach to madness. The *crid*, which is their favourite weapon, is a foot and a half long; it is shaped like a poinard, and the blade is serpentine. They never carry more than one to battle; but in private quarrels two are necessary: they parry with that in the left hand, and attack the adversary with the other. The wounds made by this weapon are very dangerous, and the duel most commonly ends in the death of both the combatants.

The inhabitants of Celebes are rendered active, industrious, and robust, by a rigid education. Every hour in the day their nurses rub them with oil, or water just warm*. These repeated unctions encourage Nature to exert herself freely. They are weaned at a year old; an idea prevailing, that if they continued to suck any longer, it would hurt their understandings†. When they are five or six years old, the male-children of any distinction are intrusted to the care of some relation or friend, that their courage may not be weakened by the caresses of their mothers, and a habit of reciprocal tenderness.

* In such a warm climate the oil perhaps might be of use in preserving their bodies from the influence of the sun; but one would think, that rubbing children so frequently with warm water, would rather tend to enervate, than make them robust. T.

† The same idea prevails in this country. Indeed twelve months suck appears to be sufficient. T.

derness. They do not return to their families till they arrive at the age of fifteen or sixteen, when the law allows them to marry, a liberty they seldom make use of before they are thoroughly versed in the exercise of arms.

Formerly these people acknowledged no other gods but the sun and the moon. They sacrificed to them in the public squares, having no materials which they thought valuable enough to be employed in raising temples. According to the creed of these islanders, the sun and moon were eternal as well as the heavens, whose empire they divided. Ambition set them at variance. The moon, flying from the sun, miscarried, and was delivered of the earth; she was big with several other worlds, which she will successively bring forth, but without violence, in order to repair the loss of those whom the fire of her conqueror will consume.

These absurdities were universally received at Celebes; but they had not so lasting an influence over either the nobles or the people as is found in the religious doctrines of other nations. About two centuries ago, some Christians and Mahometans having brought their opinions hither, the principal king of the country took a total dislike to the national worship. Alarmed at the terrible catastrophe, with which he was equally threatened by both the new systems of religion, he convened a general assembly. On the day appointed, he ascended an eminence, where, spreading out his hands towards heaven, and in a standing posture, he addressed the following prayer to the Supreme Being:

“Great God! I do not at this time fall down before thee, because I do not implore thy clemency: I have nothing to ask of thee which thou oughtest not in justice to grant. Two foreign nations, whose worship is widely different, are come to strike terror into me and my subjects. They assure me, that thou wilt punish me eternally if I do not obey thy laws: I have therefore a right to require that thou wouldest make them known to me. I do not ask thee to reveal the impenetrable mysteries which surround thy essence, and which to me are useless. I am come hither to inquire, together with my people, what those duties are
“which

“ which thou intendest to prescribe to us. Speak, O
“ my God ! since thou art the author of nature, thou
“ canst discern the bottom of our hearts, and knowest
“ that it is impossible they should entertain any thoughts
“ of disobedience. But if thou condescendest not to
“ make thyself understood by mortals, if it is unworthy
“ of thine essence to employ the language of man to dic-
“ tate the duties required of man, I call my whole na-
“ tion, the sun which enlightens me, the earth that sup-
“ ports me, the waters that encompass my dominions,
“ and thyself, to witness, that in the sincerity of my
“ heart I seek to know thy will : and I declare to thee
“ this day, that I shall acknowledge, as the depositaries
“ of the oracles, the ministers of either religion whom
“ thou shalt cause to arrive the first in our harbours.
“ The winds and the waves are the ministers of thy
“ power, let them be the signals of thy will. If, with
“ these honest intentions, I embrace an error, my con-
“ science will be at ease, and the blame will lye upon
“ thee.”

The assembly broke up, determined to wait the orders of heaven, and to follow the first missionaries that should arrive at Celebes. The apostles of the Coran were the most active ; the sovereign with his people were circumcised, and the other parts of the island soon followed their example.

This unlucky circumstance did not hinder the Portuguese from gaining a footing at Celebes. They kept their ground there, even after they were driven out of the Moluccas. The motive which detained them, and which drew the English to this place, was the facility with which they could procure spices, which the natives of the country found means to get, notwithstanding the precautions that were taken to keep them at a distance from the places where they grew.

The Dutch, who by this competition were prevented from monopolizing the articles of cloves and nutmegs, attempted in 1660 to put a stop to this trade, which they called contraband. To favour this design, they had recourse to means repugnant to all morality, but which an insatiable avarice had familiarized in Asia. By persevering in these cruel maxims, they succeeded

so far as to drive out the Portuguese, keep off the English, and take possession of the harbour and fort of Macassar. From that time they were absolute masters of the island, without having conquered it. The princes among whom it was divided re-united in a kind of confederacy. They hold assemblies, from time to time, on affairs that concern the general interest. The result of their determinations becomes a law to each state. When any contest arises, it is decided by the governor of the Dutch colony who presides at this diet. He observes these different sovereigns with a watchful eye, and keeps them in perfect equality with each other, to prevent any of them from aggrandizing himself to the prejudice of the Company. They have disarmed them all, under pretence of hindering them from injuring each other; but, in reality, with a view of depriving them of the power of breaking their chains.

The Chinese, who are the only foreigners permitted to come to Celebes, carry thither tobacco, gold-wire, china, and unwrought silks. The Dutch sell opium, spirituous liquors, gum-lac, fine and coarse linens. They have but little gold from thence, but great quantities of rice, wax, slaves, and tripam, a species of muskum which, the rounder and blacker it is, the more excellent it is esteemed. The customs bring in 80,000 livres * to the Company; but it receives a much larger profit from its trade, and the tenth part of the territory, which it holds in full right of sovereignty. These advantages, however, taken all together, do not counterbalance the expences of the colony, which rise to 150,000 livres † more. It would certainly be given up, if it was not with good reason looked upon as the key of the spice islands.

THE settlement at Borneo was formed with a less interesting view.

The Dutch open a communication with Borneo.

It is one of the largest, if not actually the largest island hitherto known.

The ancient inhabitants live in the inland parts. The coasts are peopled with inhabitants from Macassar, with Javaneſe,

* 3,500 l.

† About 6,562 l.

Javanese, Malaysians, and Arabs, who, to the vices that are natural to them, have added a ferocity hardly to be met with elsewhere.

The most useful production of this large country is camphire, which is a volatile, subtile oil, or resinous substance. The tree from which it is drawn grows in several of the Asiatic islands; and it has lately been discovered that this singular substance may be obtained in a greater or less quantity from all the trees that are of the laurel tribe.

To procure this camphire, the tree is cut into small pieces, like matches, which are put into a vessel shaped like a bladder; they are boiled in water, and the camphire forms a glutinous mass at the top. The Dutch are the only people in Europe who possess the secret of refining it in the gross.

The camphire from Borneo is unquestionably the best. Its superior excellence is so well known, that the Japanese give five or six quintals of their own for one pound of that from Borneo; and the Chinese, who look upon it as the best medicine in the world, give us no less than eight hundred livres * a pound for it. The Pagans in all the eastern countries use common camphire in their fire-works, and the Mahometans put it into the mouth of the dead at the time of burial.

About the year 1526 the Portuguese attempted to settle at Borneo. Too weak to make their arms respected, they tried to gain the good-will of one of the sovereigns of the country, by offering him some pieces of tapestry. This weak prince took the figures wrought in it for enchanted men, who would strangle him in the night-time, if he suffered them to come near his person. The explanations they gave to remove his apprehensions had no effect; he obstinately refused to receive the present into his palace, or to admit those who brought it into his capital.

However, these voyagers afterwards gained admission; but it proved their misfortune, for they were all massacred. A factory which the English established some years after shared the same fate. The Dutch, who had

had met with no better treatment, appeared again in the year 1748 with a Squadron, which, though very weak, so far imposed upon the prince, who has the power entirely in his hands, that he determined to grant them the privilege of trading for it exclusively; with this single reserve, that he should be allowed to deliver five hundred thousand pounds of this article to the Chinese, who had always frequented his ports. Since this treaty, the Company sends rice, opium, salt, and coarse linens, to Bendermaffen, from whence they bring some diamonds, and about six hundred thousand weight of pepper, at one and thirty livres * a hundred weight. The profits arising from the goods they export are scarce sufficient to answer the expences of the colony, though they amount to no more than 32,000 livres †. Sumatra proves of greater advantage to them.

THOUGH this island, before the arrival of the Europeans in the Indies, was divided into several kingdoms, Achen was the center of all trade.

Settlements of the Dutch at Sumatra.

Its harbour was frequented by all the Asiatic states, and afterwards by the Portuguese and other nations, who raised themselves upon their ruins. Here all the productions of the east were bartered for gold, pepper, and other articles of merchandise with which this more opulent than healthy climate abounded. The disturbances which threw this famous emporium into confusion put a stop to all industry, and drove the foreign merchants away.

When this declension happened, the Dutch formed the project of making settlements in other parts of the island, which enjoyed more tranquillity. Those that were allowed to fix in the empire of Indrapore are much reduced, since the English established a settlement on the same coast. The factory of Iamby is of still less use, as the neighbouring kings have stript the prince of this district of his possessions. The Company indemnifies itself for these misfortunes at Palinban, where, for sixty thousand livres ‡, it maintains a fort, a gar-

O 2

rison

* 1 l. 7 s. 0 1/2 d.

† 1,400 l.

‡ 2,625 l.

rison of eighty men, and two or three sloops, which keep cruising continually. It purchases annually two million weight of pepper, at one and twenty livres * a hundred, and a million and an half of calin, at fifty-seven livres ten sols † a hundred. This, though it seems to be a moderate price, is of advantage to the king, who buys it from his subjects at a still lower rate. Though he takes some part of the provision and cloathing for his states from the merchants at Batavia, they are obliged to settle accounts with him in piastres. The treasures he has amassed of the silver and of the gold found in his rivers, are known to be immense. A single European vessel might take possession of all these riches, and, with some troops for landing, maintain a post, which would be won without difficulty. It seems very extraordinary, that avarice should never have prompted any adventurer to undertake so lucrative and easy an enterprize.

Civilized nations, who, to make themselves masters of the universe, have trampled upon all the rights, and stifled all the dictates of nature, will hardly shrink at one additional act of injustice or cruelty. There is not a nation in Europe which does not think it has a just right to seize the treasures of the east. Setting aside religion, which it is no longer fashionable to plead, since its very ministers have brought it into disrepute, by their unbounded avarice and ambition, how many pretences are still remaining to justify the rage of invasion? They who live under a monarchy are desirous of extending the glory and empire of their master beyond the seas. These happy people are ready to venture their lives in the extreme parts of the globe, to increase the number of fortunate subjects, who live under the laws of the best of princes. A free nation, which is its own master, is born to command the ocean; it cannot secure the dominion of the sea without seizing upon the land, which belongs to the first possessor, that is, to him who is able to drive out the ancient inhabitants; they are to be enslaved by force or fraud, and exterminated, in order to get their possessions. Moreover, the interests of commerce, the national debt, and the majesty

* 18 s. 4½d.

† 2l. 10 s. 3½d.

of the people, require it. Republicans, who have happily shaken off the yoke of foreign tyranny, must impose it on others in their turn. If they have broken their chains, it is to forge new ones. They hate monarchy, but they are in want of slaves: they have no land of their own, why should they not seize upon those of others?

THE trade of the Dutch at Siam was at first very considerable. A tyrannic prince, who oppressed this unhappy country, having, about the year 1660, shewn a want of respect to the Company, it punished him, by abandoning the factories it had established in his dominions, as if it would have been a favour to have continued them. These republicans, who affected an air of grandeur, chose at that time to have their presence looked upon as a favour, a security, and an honour; and they inculcated this singular prejudice with so much success, that, in order to engage them to return, a pompous embassy was sent, asking pardon for what had past, and giving the strongest assurances of a different conduct for the future.

Trade of the Dutch at Siam.

The time, however, was not far distant, when this deference was to cease, and it was hastened by the naval enterprizes of other powers. The affairs of the Company at Siam have always been in a declining state: having no fort, it has never been in a condition to maintain the exclusive privilege it had obtained. The king, notwithstanding the presents he requires, sells merchandise to traders of all nations, and takes goods from them on advantageous terms; with this difference only, that they are obliged to stop at the mouth of the Menan, whereas the Dutch go up the river as far as the capital of the empire, where their agent constantly resides. Their affairs derive no great advantage from this privilege: they send only one vessel, laden with Javanese horses, sugar, spices, and linens; and receive, in return, calin* at 70 † livres a hundred weight; gum-lac,

O 3

* A kind of metal, finer than lead, but coarser than tin, perhaps a mixture of both. It is used in China for covering the roofs of houses; and the tea-boxes which come from thence are made of calin. T.

† 3 l. 1 s. 3 d.

lac, at 52 *; some elephants teeth, at five livres six sols † a pound; and a little gold, at 175 livres 10 sols ‡ a mark. One may venture to assert, that their connections here are kept up purely on account of the sappan wood, which is necessary for the stowing of their ships, and for which they give no less than five livres § a hundred weight. Were it not for this want, they would long ago have given up a trade where the expence exceeds the profits; because the king, who is the only merchant in his dominions, sets a very low price upon the commodities that are imported. A more interesting object turned the ambitious views of the Dutch towards Malacca.

*Situation of
the Dutch at
Malacca.*

THESE republicans, who knew the importance of this place, used their utmost efforts to make themselves masters of it. Having miscarried in two attempts, they had recourse at last, if we may believe a satirical writer, to an expedient which a virtuous people will never employ, but which frequently answers the purpose of a degenerate nation. They endeavoured to bribe the Portuguese governor, whom they knew to be covetous. The bargain was struck, and he introduced the enemy into the city in 1641. The besiegers hastened to his house, and massacred him, to save the payment of the 500,000 livres § they had promised him. But truth obliges us to declare, for the honour of the Portuguese, that they did not surrender till after a most obstinate defence. The commander of the victorious party asked the commander of the other, in a boasting strain, which is not natural to his nation, When he would return? *When your crimes are greater than ours*, replied the Portuguese gravely.

The conquerors found a fort, which, like all the works of the Portuguese, was built with a degree of strength which has never since been imitated by any nation. They found the climate very healthy, though hot and moist: but the trade there was entirely decayed;

* 2l. 5s. 6d. † 4s. 7½d. ‡ 7l. 13s. 12d.

§ 4s. 4½d. § 21,875 l.

the continual exactions having deterred all nations from resorting thither. It has not been revived by the Company, either on account of some insuperable difficulties, or the want of moderation, or the fear of injuring Batavia. The business is confined at present to the sale of a small quantity of opium, and a few blue linens; and to the purchase of elephants teeth, calin, which costs 70 livres * a hundred weight; and a small quantity of gold, at 180 livres † a mark. Their affairs would be carried on with more spirit, and to a greater amount, if the princes adhered more faithfully to the exclusive treaty subsisting between them. Unfortunately for their interests, they have formed connections with the English, who furnish them with the commodities they want at a cheaper rate, and give a greater price for their merchandise. Their farms and customs make them some little amends, bringing in 200,000 livres ‡ a year. These revenues, however, and the advantages of commerce taken together, are not sufficient to maintain the garrison and people employed; which costs the Company 40,000 livres ||.

This might for a long time appear to be a small sacrifice. Before the Europeans doubled the Cape of Good Hope, the Moors, who were the only maritime people in India, sailed from Surat and Bengal to Malacca, where they found ships from the Molucca islands, Japan, and China. When the Portuguese became masters of this place; they went themselves to Bantam for pepper, and to Ternate for spices. To make their return the shorter, they attempted a passage by the Sunda islands, and succeeded. The Dutch, who had got possession of Malacca and Batavia, were masters of the two only straits that were then known. They cruized there in times of war, and intercepted the enemy's vessels. This situation has ceased to be respectable, since the strait of Bali was discovered by the French at the end of the war in 1744, and that of Lomboc by the English in the last war. Batavia will always continue to be the staple of an immense trade; but Malacca loses the only advantage that gave it any importance.

THOUGH

2 l. 1 s. 3 d. † 7 l. 17 s. 6 d. ‡ 8,750 l. § 11,750 l.

*Settlement
of the Dutch
at Ceylon.*

THOUGH the Company did not foresee this event, yet at the same time that they were enlarging and strengthening their power in the eastern parts of Asia, they formed the project of securing to themselves that part of India where the Portuguese continued to counteract their operations, and of taking from them the island of Ceylon. It is observable, that this nation, so distinguished for the justness of its commercial views, endeavoured to get those productions into its hands, which were either absolutely necessary, or nearly so, before it turned its attention to articles of luxury. It owes its grandeur in Asia to the spice trade, and in Europe to the herring fishery. The Moluccas supply it with nutmegs and cloves, and Ceylon furnishes it with cinnamon.

Spilberg, the first of their admirals who had the courage to display his colours on the coasts of this delicious island, found the Portuguese employed in subverting the government and the religion of the country; in setting the sovereigns, among whom it was divided, to destroy each other; and in raising themselves upon the ruins of the states that were thus successively demolished. He offered the court of Candy the assistance of his country, which was joyfully accepted. *You may assure your masters, (said the monarch,) that if they will build a fort, myself, my wife and children, will be foremost in bringing you the necessary materials.*

The people of Ceylon looked upon the Dutch in no other light than as the enemies of their oppressors, and accordingly joined them. By their united forces the Portuguese were, in the year 1658, entirely dispossessed, after a long, bloody, and obstinate war. All their settlements fell into the hands of the Company, who still keep possession of them; excepting a small district on the eastern coast, without any port, from whence the sovereign of the country had his salt: these settlements formed a regular string, extending from two to twelve leagues into the inland parts of the island.

The fort of Jafranapatan, as well as those erected on the islands of Manar and Calpentine, were destined to prevent all correspondence with the inhabitants of the neighbouring continent. At Negombo, designed to comprehend

prehend the district in which the best cinnamon is produced, there is an harbour large enough to admit sloops; but it is not frequented, on account of a navigable river that leads from it to Columbo. This place, which the Portuguese had fortified with the greatest care, as the center of opulence, is become the principal station in the colony. It is not improbable, that, independent of the sums that had been expended upon it, the badness of its road might have determined the Dutch to fix the strength of their government at the promontory of Gallo, where there is an harbour; which, though the entrance is indeed difficult, and the basin very confined, has every other advantage that can be wished. It is here that the Company take in their cargoes for Europe.

Matar is the magazine for coffee and pepper, the culture of which has been introduced by the Company. It has no other fortification than a redoubt built upon a river that is only navigable for boats. Trinquimale is the finest and best harbour in the Indies. It is composed of several bays, where the most numerous fleets may anchor in security. No trade is carried on there. The country furnishes no one article of merchandise, and even provisions are very scarce: in short, it is protected by its barrenness. Other settlements of inferior note, that are scattered upon the coast, serve to make the communication easy, and to keep off strangers.

By these wise precautions the Company have appropriated all the productions of the island. The several articles which constitute so many branches of trade, are;

1. Amethysts, sapphires, topazes, and rubies, which are very small, and very indifferent. The Moors, who come from the coast of Coromandel, buy them, paying a moderate tax; and when they are cut, sell them at a low price in the different countries of India.

2. Pepper, which the Company buys for eight sols a pound; coffee, for which they only pay four; and cardamum, which has no fixed price. The natives of the country are so indolent, that these productions, which are all of an inferior quality, will never turn to any great advantage.

3. A hundred bales of handkerchiefs, pagnes, and ginghams, of a fine red colour, which are fabricated by the

the Malabars at Jafranapatan, where they have long been settled.

4. A small quantity of ivory, and about fifty elephants, which are carried to the coast of Coromandel. Thus this gentle and peaceful animal, which is too useful to mankind to be suffered to remain upon an island, is transported to the continent, to aggravate and bear a part in the dangers and horrors of war.

5. Areca, which the Company buys at the rate of ten livres * the ammonan, and sells upon the spot at the rate of thirty six or forty livres † to the merchants of Bengal, Coromandel, and the Maldives; who give in return rice, coarse linens, and cowries. The areca, which grows upon a species of the palm-tree, is a fruit not uncommon in most parts of Asia, and is in great plenty at Ceylon. It is oval, and would not be much unlike the date, if its extremities were less pointed. The bark is thick, smooth, and membranaceous, and covers a kernel of a whitish cast, shaped like a pear, and of the bigness of a nutmeg. When eaten by itself, as it sometimes is by the Indians, it impoverishes the blood, and causes the jaundice. It is not attended with these inconveniencies when mixed with betel.

The betel is a creeping and climbing plant like the ivy, but does no injury to the agoti, a small tree, which it embraces as its support, and is remarkably fond of. It is cultivated in the same manner as the vine. Its leaves a good deal resemble those of the citron, though they are longer and narrower at the extremity. The betel grows in all parts of India, but flourishes best in moist places.

At all times of the day, and even in the night, the Indians chew the leaves of the betel, the bitterness of which is corrected by the areca that is wrapped up in them. There is constantly mixed with it the chunam, a kind of burnt lime made of shells. The rich frequently add perfumes, either to gratify their vanity or their sensuality.

It would be thought a breach of politeness among the Indians to take leave for any long time, without presenting

* 8s. 9d. † 11. 13s.

presenting each other with a purse of betel. It is a pledge of friendship that relieves the pain of absence. No one dares to speak to a superior, unless his mouth is perfumed with betel; it would even be rude to neglect this precaution with an equal. The women of gallantry are the most lavish in the use of betel, as being a powerful incentive to love. Betel is taken after meals; betel is chewed during a visit; betel is offered when you meet, and when you separate; in short, nothing is to be done without betel. If it is prejudicial to the teeth, it assists and strengthens the stomach. At least, it is a general fashion that prevails throughout the Indies.

6. The pearl fishery, which is still one of the sources of the revenue of Ceylon. It is no improbable conjecture, that this island, which is only fifteen leagues from the continent, was, in some distant period or other, separated from it by some great convulsion of nature. The tract of sea which at present divides it from the land, is so full of shallows, that no ships can sail upon it; and there are only a few places where small boats may pass in four or five feet water. The Dutch, who assume the sovereignty here, have always two armed sloops to enforce payment of the taxes they have imposed. In this strait the pearl fishery is carried on, which was formerly of great importance; but this source of wealth has been so much exhausted, that it is but rarely resorted to. The bank, indeed, is visited every year, to see how it is replenished with oysters; but, in general, it is five or six years before a sufficient quantity is to be found. The fishery is then farmed out; and, every thing computed, it may produce to the revenues of the Company 200,000 livres *. Upon the same coasts is found a shell-fish called xanxus, of which the Indians at Bengal make bracelets. The fishery is free, but the trade is exclusive.

After all, the great object of the Company is cinnamon. The root of the tree that produces it is large, and divides it into several branches covered with a bark, which on the outer side is of a greyish brown, and on the

the inner of a reddish cast. The wood of this root is hard, white, and has no smell. The body of the tree, which grows to the height of eight or ten toises *, is covered, as well as its numerous branches, with a bark which at first is green, and afterwards red. The leaf, if it were not longer and narrower, would not be much unlike that of the laurel. When first unfolded, it is of a flame colour; but after it has been for some time exposed to the air, and grows dry, it changes to a deep green on the upper surface, and to a lighter on the lower. The flowers are small and white, and grow in large bunches at the extremity of the branches; they have an agreeable smell, something like that of the lily of the valley. The fruit is shaped like an acorn, but is not so large. It is commonly ripe in September. When boiled in water, it yields an oil, which swims at top, and takes fire. If left to cool, it hardens into a white substance, of which candles are made, which have an agreeable smell, and are reserved for the use of the king of Ceylon. No part of the tree that produces the cinnamon is valuable except the under bark. The best season for raising and separating it from the outer bark, which is grey and rugged, is the spring, when the sap flows in the greatest abundance. It is cut into thin slices, and exposed to the sun; and curls up in drying.

The old trees produce only a coarse kind of cinnamon, which is only in perfection when the trees are not older than three or four years. When the trunk has been stripped of its bark, it receives no further nourishment; but the root is still alive, and continues to throw out fresh shoots. Besides this, the fruit of the cinnamon-tree contains a seed from which it is raised.

There are some of the Company's territories where this tree does not grow. It is only to be found in those of Negombo, Columbo, or the promontory of Gallo. The prince's forests supply the deficiency which sometimes prevails in the magazines. The mountains inhabited by the Bedas abound with this tree; but neither the Europeans nor the Cinglasses are allowed access to them, and there

* A *toise* is a measure of six French feet, or a fathom. T.

there is no way of sharing the riches of the Bedas but by declaring war against them.

As the Cinglaffes, as well as the Indians upon the continent, are divided into castes which never make any alliances with one another, each constantly adhering to the same profession; the art of barking the cinnamon-trees is a distinct occupation, and the meanest of all others, and is confined to the cast of the Cooleys. Every other islander would look upon it as a disgrace to be employed in this trade.

The cinnamon is not reckoned excellent, unless it is fine, smooth, brittle, thin, of a yellow colour inclining to red, fragrant, aromatic, and of a poignant, yet agreeable taste. The connoisseurs give the preference to the pieces that are long and slender. It adds to the delicacies of the table, and is of sovereign use in medicine.

The Dutch purchase the greatest part of their cinnamon of the Indians who are subject to them. They have engaged to take a certain quantity from the king of Candy, at a very extravagant price. Setting one against the other, it does not cost them twelve sols a pound. It would not be impossible for the ships that frequent the ports of Ceylon, to procure the tree that produces the cinnamon; but it has degenerated at Malabar, Batavia, and the isle of France, and in all parts where it has been transplanted.

Formerly the Company thought it necessary to maintain four thousand black or white soldiers, to secure the advantages they derived from Ceylon. The number is now reduced to fifteen or sixteen hundred. Their annual expences, nevertheless, amount to 2,200,000 livres*; and their revenues, and small branches of commerce, produce no more than 2,000,000 of livres†. This deficiency is supplied out of the profits arising from cinnamon. They are likewise obliged to provide for the expence attending the wars they are from time to time engaged in with the king of Candy, who is at present the sole sovereign of the island.

The Dutch freely own that these ruptures are fatal to

to them. As soon as they break out, most of the people who inhabit the coasts retire into the inland parts of the country. Notwithstanding the despotism they groan under, they look upon the yoke of the Europeans as an evil still more insupportable. The Cooleys do not always wait the commencement of hostilities as a signal for their removal; they sometimes take this desperate step the moment they perceive the least misunderstanding between the king and the Dutch. On these occasions, besides the loss of a harvest, a long train of expence and fatigue follows, to enable them to penetrate, sword in hand, into a country encompassed on all sides, by rivers, woods, hollow vales, and mountains.

These important considerations had determined the Company to endeavour to gain the good-will of the prince of Candy, by shewing him all imaginable civilities. Every year they sent an ambassador laden with rich presents. They offered their ships to convey his priests to Siam, to be instructed in the religion of that country, which is the same with his own. Notwithstanding they had taken the forts and the lands which were occupied by the Portuguese, they contented themselves with receiving from this prince the appellation of *guardians of his coasts*. They also made him several other concessions.

These singular instances of management have not, however, been always sufficient to maintain good harmony, which has several times been interrupted. The war which ended on the 14th of February 1766 had been the longest and the most active of any that had been occasioned by distrust and an opposition of interests. As the Company prescribed terms to a monarch who was driven from his capital, and obliged to wander in the woods, they made a very advantageous treaty. Their sovereignty was acknowledged over all the

* These hardships would have been rendered still greater, if the natives of the island had been supported by some European power, as we are assured they would have been the last time by the English, had not affairs of greater importance drawn all their force to Bengal.

countries they were in possession of before the troubles broke out; and that part of the coasts which remained in the occupation of the natives was ceded to them. They are to be allowed to gather cinnamon in all the plains, and the court is to sell them the best sort that is produced in the mountainous parts, at the rate of forty-one livres five sols * for eighteen pounds. Their commissaries are authorised to extend their trade to all parts where they think it can be carried on with advantage. The government engages to have no connection with any other foreign power, and even to deliver up any Europeans who may happen to stray into the island. In return for so many concessions, the king is to receive annually the value of the produce of the ceded coasts; and from thence his subjects are to be furnished gratis with salt sufficient for their consumption. It should seem that the Company may derive great advantages from so favourable a situation.

The property of the lands in Ceylon belongs more of right to the sovereign than in any other part of India. This pernicious system has, in that island, been attended with fatal consequences inseparable from it. The people are in a state of total inactivity. They live in huts, have no furniture, and subsist upon fruits; and those who are most at their ease have no other covering than a piece of coarse linen wrapped about their waist. It were to be wished that the Dutch would do one thing, which all the nations who have established colonies in Asia are to blame for never having attempted, and that is, to distribute the lands among the families, and make them their own property. They would forget, and perhaps hate their former sovereign: they would attach themselves to a government that consulted their happiness: they would become industrious, and occasion a greater consumption. Under such circumstances, the island of Ceylon would enjoy that opulence which was designed by nature; it would be secure from revolutions, and be enabled to support the settlements of Malabar and Coromandel, which it is bound to protect.

*Trade of the
Dutch on the
coast of Coromandel.*

THE Portuguese, in the time of their prosperity, had formed some tolerable settlements on the coast of Coromandel. That at Negapatan was taken from them by the Dutch in 1658. It gradually increased to ten or twelve villages, which were all inhabited by weavers. In 1690 it was thought proper to build a fort to secure their tranquillity, and in 1742 the tower was surrounded by walls. This is the center of trade, where all the investments of white, blue, painted, printed, fine and coarse linens are made by the Company for the consumption in Europe or India, whether at Bimilipatnam, Pallicate, Sadraspatan, or at its factories on the fishing coast. Their investments, which commonly amount to four or five thousand bales, are carried to Negapatan, by two sloops stationed in these seas for that purpose.

The Dutch sell, on the coast of Coromandel, iron, lead, copper, calin, tutenague*, pepper, and spices. These united articles produce a million of livres†, to which we may add eighty thousand ‡ arising from the customs. The expences of their several establishments amount to eight hundred thousand livres §; and we venture to assert, without fear of being accused of exaggeration, that the freight of the ships swallows up the rest of the profits. The neat produce therefore of the Coromandel trade to the Company is the profit arising from the linens they export. Their trade on the Malabar coast is still less advantageous. It commenced pretty nearly at the same period, and was established at the expence of the same nation.

*Trade of the
Dutch on the
coast of Mala-
bar.*

It appears to be no difficult task to guess at the motives that led to this new enterprize. After the Portuguese had lost Ceylon, they sold the wild cinnamon of Malabar in Europe at almost the same price at which they had always sold the right sort. Though this rivalry could not continue long,

* A kind of coarse pewter. T.

† 43,750 l.

‡ 3,500 l.

§ 35,000 l.

long, it gave uneasiness to the Dutch, who, in 1662, ordered Vangeons, their general, to attack Cochin.

The place was no sooner invested than intelligence was received of a peace being concluded between Holland and Portugal. This news was kept secret. The operations were carried on with vigour; and the besieged, harrassed by continual assaults, surrendered on the eighth day. The next day a frigate arrived from Goa with the articles of peace. The conquerors gave themselves no further trouble to justify their treachery, than by saying, that those who complained in so haughty a stile, had observed the same conduct at Brazil a few years before.

After this conquest, the Dutch thought themselves firmly established at Malabar. Cochin seemed to be necessary to protect Cananor, Cranganor, and Quillon, of which they had just before made themselves masters, and the factory of Porcat, which they had formed the plan of at that time, and have since actually established. The event has not answered their expectation. The Company have not succeeded in their hopes of excluding other European nations from this coast. They procure no kind of merchandise there, but what they are furnished with from their other settlements; and being rivalled in their trade, they are obliged to give a higher price here than in the markets where they enjoy an exclusive privilege.

Their articles of sale consist of a small quantity of allum, benzoin *, camphire, tutenague, sugar, iron, calin, lead, copper, and quick-silver. The vessel that carries this slender cargo returns to Batavia laden with caire, or cocoa-tree bark, for the use of the port. By these articles the Company gain, at most 360,000 livres †, which, with 120,000 ‡ arising from the customs, make the sum of 480,000 livres §. In times of profound peace the maintenance of these settlements costs 464,000 livres §, so that 16,000 ¶ only remain to defray the expences of

P 3

their

* Benzoin, sometimes called *assa dulcis*, is a medicinal kind of gum, procured by a longitudinal incision made in a tree, whose leaves resemble those of the almond-tree. It is of a yellowish colour, an agreeable scent, and melts easily.

† 15,750 l. ‡ 5,250 l. § 21,000 l. § 20,300 l. ¶ 700 l.

their shipping, for which that sum is certainly not sufficient.

It is true, the Company gets two millions weight of pepper at Malabar, which is carried in floops to Ceylon, where it is put aboard the ships fitted out for Europe. It is likewise true, that, by virtue of these capitulations, they pay only 192 * livres the candil, which weighs five hundred pounds, for which other Companies give 240 †, and private merchants 288 ‡; but whatever advantage may be made of this article, it is overbalanced by the bloody wars that are occasioned by it ||.

These observations had doubtless escaped the notice of Goloness, the director-general of Batavia, when he ventured to affirm, that the settlement at Malabar, which he had long superintended, was one of the most important settlements belonging to the Company. "I am so far from being of your opinion," said General Mossel, "that I could wish the sea had swallowed it up about a century ago."

Be this as it may, the Dutch, in the height of their success, found the want of a place where their vessels might put in to get refreshments, either in going to, or returning from India. They were undetermined in their choice, when Van Riebeck the surgeon, in 1650, proposed the Cape of Good Hope, which the Portuguese had imprudently despised. This judicious man, during a stay of some weeks, was convinced that a colony might be placed to advantage on this southern extremity of Africa, which might serve as a staple for the commerce of Europe and Asia. The

The Dutch settlement at the Cape of Good Hope.

* 8l. 8s. † 10l. 10s. ‡ 12l. 12s.

|| With a little more attention, it perhaps might be made an advantageous article. In order to insure success, they had only to buy pepper at a price which would oblige other nations to give up this branch of trade. The profits the Company would make upon the immense quantity with which they were furnished by their eastern colonies, would fully indemnify them for sacrificing their interest in this instance. In consequence of this arrangement, they would be almost solely in the possession of the different spices, the use of which has become universal throughout the greatest part of the known world.

care of forming this settlement was committed to him, and his measures were concerted upon a good plan. He caused it to be stipulated, that every man who chose to fix there should have sixty acres of land allotted him. Corn, cattle, and utensils were to be provided for those who wanted them. Young women taken from almshouses were given them as companions, to soften and to share their fatigues. All those who, after three years, found the climate did not agree with them, had liberty to return to Europe, and to dispose of their possessions in what manner they pleased. Having settled these arrangements, he set sail.

The large tract of country which it was proposed to cultivate was inhabited by the Hottentots, who, according to a French traveller, are divided into several clans, each of which forms an independent village. Their habitations are huts covered with skins, which cannot be entered without creeping upon their hands and knees, and are disposed in a circle. These huts are hardly of any other use than to hold a few provisions and household furniture. The Hottentots never enter them but in the rainy season. They are always found lying at their doors; and if at any time they interrupt their repose, it is to smoke a strong herb which serves them instead of tobacco.

The management of cattle is the sole employment of these savages. As there is but one herd in each town which is common to all the inhabitants, each of them is appointed to guard it in his turn. This post requires constant vigilance, the country being full of wild beasts, which are more voracious at this extremity of Africa than any where else. The shepherd sends out scouts every day. If a leopard or tyger is seen in the neighbourhood, the whole town takes up arms, and flies to the enemy, who seldom escapes from so many poisoned arrows, and sharp stakes hardened in the fire.

As the Hottentots neither have, nor appear to have riches, and their oxen and sheep, which is all the property they have, are in common, it is natural to imagine that there is little occasion for disputes among them. They are accordingly united to each other by the closest ties of friendship; nor do they ever engage in any war,

war, even with their neighbours ; setting aside the quarrels between the shepherds on account of cattle that may have strayed or been carried off.

It has often been remarked, that public customs gave rise to the first colonies. Marks of distinction were adopted, to make men unite and recognize one another. A broken nose, a flat head, bored ears, paintings, burnings, head-dresses, are the characteristics of the savage world. As no plan of morality or education prevails among them, it follows of course, that universal customs must with them supply the place of policy and government. These rude men, the children of nature, depend entirely on the temper of the climate : and hence the Hottentots have the manners of herdsmen.

When the Dutch arrived there, they were, like all the people who led a pastoral life, full of benevolence, and partook, in some degree, of the slovenliness and stupidity of the animals they kept. They had instituted an order, with which they honoured those who had subdued any of the monsters that were destructive to their sheep-folds ; and they revered the memory of the heroes who had done service to mankind. The apotheosis of Hercules had the same origin.

Reibeck, in conformity to the notions unhappily prevailing among the Europeans, began to take possession of the most commodious part of the territory ; and he afterwards designed to fix himself there. This behaviour displeased the natives. *On what pretence (said their envoy to these strangers) have you sown our lands? Why do you employ them to feed your cattle? How would you behave if you saw your own fields invaded in this manner? You fortify yourselves with no other view than by degrees to reduce the Hottentots to slavery.* These remonstrances were followed by some hostilities, which brought the founder of the colony back to those principles of justice and humanity that were agreeable to his natural character. He purchased the country he wanted to occupy for the sum of 90,000 livres *, which was paid in merchandise. All parties were reconciled, and, from that time to this, there has been no further disturbance.

* 3937 l. 10s.

It has been proved, that the Company have expended 46,000,000 of livres * in raising the colony to its present state. A few particulars will enable us to judge how so considerable a sum has been employed.

It is computed that there are at the Cape of Good Hope about twelve thousand Europeans, Dutch, Germans, and French Refugees. Some part of these numbers reside in the capital, and two considerable towns: the rest are dispersed along the coast, which extends fifty leagues into the country. The soil of the Hottentots being sandy, and only good by intervals, the husbandmen choose to confine themselves to those places where they meet with water, wood, and fertile lands; three advantages seldom found together.

The Company formerly procured slaves from Madagascar, who alleviated the burthen of the white people. Since the French appeared as rivals, this communication has been discontinued. The present planters consist of a few Malays, who are unaccustomed to the climate, and are scarce fit for the work that is required of them.

If it were practicable to make the Hottentots steady, great advantages might accrue, which cannot be hoped for from their present character. All that has yet been done, has been to prevail with the poorest of them to engage in their service for one, two, or three years. They are of a docile temper, and perform the work that is expected from them; but, at the expiration of their agreement, they take the cattle that are allowed them for wages, rejoin their clan, and never make their appearance again, till they have oxen or sheep to barter for knives, tobacco, and brandy. They find inexplicable charms in the independent and indolent life they lead in their deserts. Nothing can wean them from this attachment. One of their children was taken from the cradle, and instructed in our manners and religion: he made a progress answerable to the pains that were bestowed upon his education; he was sent to India, and usefully employed in trade. Happening, by accident, to revisit his country, he went to see his relations

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in their hut. He was struck with the simplicity that appeared there; he cloathed himself with a sheep-skin, and went to the fort to carry back his European habiliments. *I am come,* (said he to the governor,) *to renounce for ever the mode of life you have taught me to embrace. I am resolved to follow, till death, the manners and religion of my ancestors. As a token of my affection, I will keep the collar and sword you have given me: all the rest you will permit me to leave behind.* He did not wait for an answer, but ran away, and was never heard of after.

Though the character of the Hottentots is not such as the Dutch could wish, the Company derive solid advantages from this colony. Indeed the tenth part of the corn and wine, together with their customs and other duties, do not exceed 240,000 livres*. They gain no more than forty thousand† by their thick cloths, common thread and cotton pieces, hardware, coals, and other inconsiderable articles, which they vend at this place.

They receive a still smaller profit from sixty lecques of red wine, and eighty or ninety of white, which they carry to Europe every year. The lecque weighs about twelve hundred pounds. There are only two places in the neighbourhood of Constantia that produce this wine. The Company might have it entirely genuine, and at a very low rate. Happily the governor finds it his interest to allow the cultivators to mix it with the produce of the adjacent vineyards. By this management, what remains of the celebrated wine, the genuine excellent Cape wine, is sold to foreign vessels that happen to touch at the coasts at four livres‡ a bottle. It is generally preferable to that which is extorted by tyranny. Nothing good can be expected where it is not voluntarily obtained.

The expences necessary for the support of so large a settlement, swallow up, at least, all these small profits taken together; its utility must therefore rest upon some other foundation.

The Dutch ships that sail to and from India find a

safe

* 10,500 l.

† 1,750 l.

‡ 3 s. 6 d.

safe asylum at the Cape; a delightful, serene, and temperate sky; and learn every thing of importance that happens in both those parts of the globe. Here they take in butter, meal, wine, large quantities of pickled vegetables for their voyage, and for the use of the colonies. They might draw much greater advantages from this settlement, if the Company, blinded by their avidity, were not perpetually checking the industry of the planters. They oblige them to part with their provisions at so low a price, that they have not, for a long time, been able to procure cloathing and other necessities.

This tyrannical conduct might, perhaps, be borne with, if the victims of it were authorised to sell their superfluous produce to foreign navigators, whom the convenience of their situation or other reasons might invite into their ports. But a spirit of jealousy in trade, which is one of the greatest evils that can befall humanity, has deprived them of this resource. The Dutch have long flattered themselves, that by withholding this conveniency from other trading nations, they should make them abandon India in disgust. Notwithstanding they have experienced the reverse of this, their conduct is not altered; though it was easy to discern, that all the wealth that flowed into the colony would, sooner or later, return to the Company. The governor only is authorised to supply the most pressing necessities of those who touch at the Cape. These wrong measures have deservedly been the source of a thousand inconveniencies.

We cannot omit taking this opportunity of doing justice to M. Tolbac, who at present presides over this colony. This generous man, during the last war, set an example of benevolence and disinterestedness, which was not to be found in any of his predecessors. As his understanding raised him above prejudice, and possessing a sufficient degree of firmness to deviate from the absurd orders he received, he encouraged the nations who endeavoured to supplant one another to repair to his colony for subsistence. The price was regulated by so just a standard, that, while it was so moderate as to invite purchasers, it was high enough to animate the cultivators

tors to industry. May this wise magistrate long enjoy the pleasing consciousness of having made the fortune of his fellow-citizens, and the glory of having neglected his own!

If the Company should adopt his plan, they will imitate the spirit of their founders, who did nothing by chance; and, without waiting for the happy events we have been describing, set themselves to find out a place which they might make the center of their power. They had cast their eyes upon Java as early as the year 1609.

*Dominions of
the Dutch in the
island of Java.*

THE people of this island, which is two hundred leagues in length, and thirty or forty in breadth, traced their origin from China, tho' they retained nothing either of its religion or its manners. A very superstitious species of Mohammedanism constituted the prevailing worship. Some idolaters still remained in the interior part of the country; and these were the only inhabitants of Java that were not arrived at the last stage of depravity. This island, formerly under the dominion of a single monarch, was at that time divided among several sovereigns, who were perpetually at war with each other. These eternal dissensions, while they kept up a military spirit among the people, made them neglect manners. Their enmity to strangers, and want of confidence in each other, would lead one to conclude that this nation felt no sentiment but hatred. Here men were tygers to each other, and seemed to unite in society more for the sake of committing mutual injuries, than of receiving mutual assistances. A Javanese never accosted his brother without having a poinard in his hand; ever watchful to prevent, or prepared to commit some act of violence. The grandees had a great number of slaves, either bought, taken in war, or detained for debt, whom they treated with the utmost inhumanity. They cultivated the lands, and performed all kinds of hard labour. The Javanese chewed betel, smoked opium, lived with his concubines, fought, or slept. These people possessed a considerable share of understanding, but retained few traces of any moral principle. They had not so much the character of an unenlightened as of a degenerated

degenerated nation : in short, they were a set of men, who, from a regular government had fallen into a kind of anarchy, and gave full scope to the impetuous emotions which nature excites in these climates.

This depraved character of the inhabitants did not alter the views of the Company with respect to Java. They might be counteracted by the English, who were then in possession of a part of the trade of this island : but this obstacle was soon removed ; the weakness of James the First, and the corruption of his council, had so damped the spirits of these haughty Britons, that they suffered themselves to be supplanted, without making those efforts that might have been expected from their bravery. The natives of the country, deprived of their support, were forced to submit ; but it required time, address, and policy, to accomplish that scheme.

It was one of the fundamental maxims of the Portuguese, to persuade those princes they wanted to engage or retain in a state of dependence, to send their children to Goa, to be educated at the expence of the court of Lisbon, and initiated early into its manners and principles. But this, which was in itself a good project, was spoiled by the conquerors, who admitted these young people to a participation of the most criminal pleasures, and the most shameful scenes of debauchery. The consequence was, that, when these Indians arrived at maturity, they could not help detesting, or at least despising, such abandoned instructors. The Dutch adopted the same plan, and improved upon it. They endeavoured to convince their pupils of the weakness, inconstancy, and treachery of their subjects, and still more of the power, wisdom, and good faith of the Company. By this method they strengthened their usurpations ; but we are obliged to say, that the Dutch employed means that were treacherous and cruel.

The government of the island, which was founded entirely on the Feudal laws, seemed calculated to promote discord. Fathers and sons turned their arms against each other : they supported the pretensions of the weak against the strong, and of the strong against the weak, as they saw occasion : they sometimes took the monarch's part, and sometimes that of his vassals. If any person

of formidable genius ascended the throne, they raised up rivals to oppose him. Those who were not to be seduced by gold or promises, were subdued by fear. Every day was productive of some revolution, which was always begun by the intrigues of the tyrants, and always ended to their advantage. At length they became masters of the most important posts in the inland parts of the country, and of the forts that were built upon the coasts.

This plan of usurpation was only begun to be carried into execution, when a governor was appointed at Java, who had a palace and guards, and appeared in great pomp. The Company thought proper to depart from the principles of oeconomy they had hitherto adopted, from a persuasion that the Portuguese had derived a great advantage from the brilliant court kept by the viceroy of Goa; that the people of the east were to be dazzled, in order to be the more easily subdued; and that it was necessary to strike the imagination and the eyes of the Indians, who are guided more by their senses than the inhabitants of our climates.

The Dutch had another reason for assuming an air of dignity: they had been represented in Asia as pirates, without a country, without laws, and without a ruler. To silence these calumnies, they endeavoured to prevail with several states adjoining to Java to send ambassadors to prince Maurice, of the house of Orange. The execution of this project procured them a double advantage, as it gave them credit with the eastern nations, and flattered the ambition of the Stadtholder, whose protection was necessary to be obtained, for reasons which we are going to explain.

When the Company obtained their exclusive privilege, the straits of Magellan, which could have no connection with the East-Indies, were improperly enough included in the grant. Isaac Lemaire, one of those rich and enterprising merchants, who ought every where to be considered as the benefactors of their country, formed the project of penetrating into the South Sea by the southern coasts. Access being denied by the only tract that was known at that time, he fitted out two ships, which passed a strait, since called by his name, running between

Cape

Cape Horn and the Staten land; and were driven by accident to the coast of Java, where they were condemned, and the crew sent prisoners to Europe.

This tyrannical proceeding gave offence to the people, already prejudiced against an exclusive commerce. It was thought absurd, that instead of giving those who attempted discoveries the encouragement they deserved, a state purely commercial should forge shackles to confine their industry. The monopoly, which the avarice of individuals had endured with impatience, became more odious, when the Company stretched the concessions that had been made them beyond their due bounds. It was found, that as their pride and influence increased with their power, the interest of the nation would at length be sacrificed to the interest, or even to the caprice of this too formidable body. It is probable, that they must have sunk under the public resentment, and that the charter, which was near expiring, would not have been renewed, if they had not been supported by Prince Maurice, favoured by the States-General, and encouraged to brave the storm by the strength they derived from their settlement at Java.

Though the tranquillity of this island may have been disturbed by various commotions, several wars, and some conspiracies, it continues to be as much in subjection to the Dutch as they wish it to be.

Bantam extends over the western part. One of its sovereigns having resigned the crown to his son, was recalled to the throne in 1680 by the natural restlessness of his temper, the bad conduct of his successor, and a powerful faction. His party was on the point of prevailing, when the young monarch, besieged in his capital by an army of thirty thousand men, without any adherents, except the companions of his debaucheries, implored the protection of the Dutch. They flew to his assistance, beat his enemies, delivered him from his rival, and re-established his authority. Though the expedition was brisk, short, and rapid, and consequently could not be expensive, they contrived to make the charges of the war amount to a prodigious sum. The situation of things would not admit of a scrutiny into the sum demanded for so great a piece of service, and the exhaust-

ed state of the finances made it impossible to discharge it. In this extremity, this weak prince determined to entail slavery on himself and his descendents, by granting to his deliverers the exclusive trade of his dominions*.

The Company maintains this great privilege with three hundred and sixty-eight men, who are stationed in two bad forts; one of which serves as a habitation for the governor, the other as a palace for the king. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 100,000 livres †, which are regained upon the merchandise sold there. Their clear profits consist of what they gain upon three millions weight of pepper, which they oblige the inhabitants to sell at twenty-five livres twelve sols ‡ a hundred.

These profits are inconsiderable in comparison of what the Company receives from T'fieribon, which it subjected without any efforts, without intrigues, and without expence. The Dutch were scarce settled at Java, when the sultan of this narrow, but very fertile state, put himself under their protection, to avoid submitting to a neighbouring prince, more powerful than himself. He sells them annually a thousand lasts of rice, each weighing three thousand three hundred pounds, at seventy-six livres sixteen sols || a last. A million weight of sugar, the finest of which costs thirteen livres nine sols § a hundred; one million two hundred thousand pounds of coffee, at four sols ¶ a pound; a hundred quintals of pepper, at four sols eight deniers → a pound; thirty thousand pounds of cotton, the finest of which costs no more than one livre eight sols ++ a pound; six hundred thousand pounds of areca, at twelve livres = a hundred.

Though

* This dependence is so complete, that, in the 1749, one of his successors was banished to Amboyna, by the intrigues of his wife, who obtained of the Council of Batavia the sceptre for one of her relations, whom she expected would be subservient to her measures. The people being dissatisfied with this arrangement, rose up in arms; but they were defeated. To pacify them, however, the Queen and her favourite were removed; and a prince of the royal family, who had been banished for a long time to Ceylon, was placed upon the throne.

† 4,375 l. ‡ 1 l. 2 s. 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. || About 3 l. 7 s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. § About 11 s. 9 d. ¶ 2 d. → About 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ++ About 1 s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. = 10 s. 6 d.

Though fixing these prices so low is a manifest imposition upon the weakness of the inhabitants, the people of Tſieribon, who are the most gentle and civilized of any in the island, have never been provoked by this injustice to take up arms. A hundred Europeans are sufficient to keep them in subjection. The expences of this settlement amount to no more than 41,000 livres *, which is gained by linens imported thither.

The empire of Mataran, which formerly extended over the whole island, and at present takes up the greatest part of it, was the last that was reduced to subjection. Often vanquished, and sometimes vanquishing, it continued its struggles for independency, when the son and brother of a sovereign, who died in 1704, disputed the succession. The nation was divided between the two rivals. He who was intitled to the crown by order of succession, had so visibly the advantage, that he must soon have got the supreme power entirely into his hands, if the Dutch had not declared in favour of his rival. The party, espoused by these republicans, at length prevailed, after a series of contests, more active, frequent, well conducted, and obstinate, than could have been expected. The young prince, whom they wanted to deprive of the right of succession to the king his father, displayed so much intrepidity, prudence, and firmness, that he would have triumphed over his enemies, had it not been for the advantage they derived from their magazines, forts, and ships. His uncle usurped his throne, but shewed himself unworthy to fill it.

When the Company restored him to the crown, they prescribed laws to him. They chose the place where his court was to be fixed, and secured his attachment by a citadel, in which a guard was maintained with no other apparent view than to protect the prince. After all these precautions, they employed every artifice to lull his attention by pleasures, to gratify his avarice by presents, and to flatter his vanity by pompous embassies. From this æra, the prince and his successors, who were educated suitably to the part they were to act, were nothing more than the despicable tools of the despotism of the

Company.

Q 3

2 1,793 l. 15 s.

Company. All that is necessary for their support, is three hundred horse and four hundred soldiers, whose maintenance, including the pay of the agents, costs them 760.000 livres *.

The Company are amply reimbursed for this expence, by the advantages it secures them. The harbours of this state afford docks for the construction of all the small vessels and sloops employed in the Company's service. They are supplied from hence with all the timber that is wanted in their several Indian settlements, and in part of their foreign colonies. Here too they load their vessels with the productions with which the kingdom is obliged to furnish them, consisting of five thousand lasts of rice, at forty-eight livres † a last; as much salt as they require, at twenty-eight livres sixteen sols ‡ a last; a hundred thousand pounds of pepper, at nineteen livres four sols § a hundred; all the indigo that is raised, at three livres || a pound; cadjang ¶, for the use of their ships, at seventy-six livres sixteen sols + a last; cotton-yarn, from twelve sols to one livre ++ a pound, according to its quality: and the small quantity of cardamomum that is produced there, at a shameful price.

The island of Madura, which is separated from the ports of Mataran only by a narrow channel, is obliged, by a garrison of fifteen men, to furnish rice at a very low rate. This island, in common with the people of Java, labours under a still more odious oppression. The Company's commissaries make use of false measure, in order to procure a larger quantity of goods from the people that are to furnish them. This fraud, practised for their own private advantage, has not hitherto been punished; and there is no reason to hope that it ever will. Balambangan is the only district in the island of Java that is not exposed to these iniquitous practices. The Dutch, who slighted it on account of its not furnishing any article of trade, have held no correspondence with it.

For

* 33,250 l. † 2 l. 2 s. ‡ About 1 l. 5 s. 2 d. § 16 s. 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

|| About 2 s. 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

¶ A small kind of bean that grows in the island of Timor. T.

+ About 3 l. 7 s. 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. ++ From about 6 d. to 1 s. 3 d.

For the rest, the Dutch having abated the turbulence of the Javanese, by gradually undermining the bad laws that maintained it; and, satisfied with having forced them to give some attention to agriculture, and with having secured to themselves a commerce perfectly exclusive, have not attempted to acquire any property in the island. Their territory extends no farther than the small kingdom of Jacatra. The ravages committed by the Dutch when they conquered this state, and the tyranny which followed that conquest, had turned it into a desert. It still remains uncultivated, and without industry.

The Dutch, those of them in particular who go to India to seek their fortunes, were hardly qualified to recover this excellent soil from its exhausted state. It was several times proposed to have recourse to the Germans; and, by the encouragements of some advances, and some gratuities, to exercise their industry in a manner the most advantageous to the Company. What these laborious people might have done in the fields, the silk manufacturers from China, and the linen-weavers from Coromandel, might have executed in the work-shops, for the improvement of manufactures. As these useful projects, however, did not favour any private views, they continued to be nothing more than projects. At length the Governors General Imhoff and Mossel, struck with a scene of such great disorder, endeavoured to find out a remedy.

With this view they sold to the Chinese and the Europeans, at a small price, the lands which the government had acquired by oppressive means. This management has not produced all the good that was expected from it. The new proprietors have seldom ventured to keep any thing upon their estates but sheep and cattle, for which they have an easy, certain, and advantageous market. They would have applied themselves to agriculture, which requires more care, greater pecuniary encouragements, and a greater number of hands, if the Company did not insist on their furnishing the commodities at the same price they give for them in the rest of the island. At this present time, there are no more than a hundred and fifty thousand slaves,

slaves, who are under the direction of a small number of free-men. The produce of their labours consists of two million weight of coffee, a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of pepper, twenty-five thousand pounds of cotton, ten thousand pounds of indigo, ten million of sugar, and six thousand lecques * of areca. The two last articles have been cultivated with more spirit than the rest; because private persons, having the liberty to purchase and export them, pay twenty per cent. dearer for them than the Company.

These commodities, as well as all those that are produced in Java, are carried to Batavia, which is built on the ruins of the ancient capital of Jacatra.

A city which has become so considerable a mart, must have received many successive improvements. It is elegantly built; the houses, though not magnificent, are pleasant, commodious, and well furnished; the streets are broad, running in strait lines, with rows of large trees on each side, and canals cut through them; they are always clean, though it has not been thought proper to pave them, for fear of increasing the heat by too strong a reflection of the sun's rays. All the public buildings have an air of grandeur; and the generality of travellers look upon Batavia as one of the finest cities in the world.

The number of inhabitants, including the suburbs and liberties, does not exceed an hundred thousand. the greatest part of this number are slaves. Here are likewise Malaysians, Javanese, free Macassars, who are all of them indolent enough; and Chinese, who have the exclusive exercise of all trades, are the only cultivators of the sugar-cane, and manage all the manufactures. The number of Europeans may amount to ten thousand; of these, four thousand born in India, are, to an inconceivable degree degenerated. This strange perversion is probably owing to the generally received custom, of committing the care of their education to slaves.

The corruptions at Batavia have, however, been exaggerated. Dissolute manners are not more prevalent

* About 7,200,000 pound weight. T.

lent there than in other settlements, formed by the Europeans in Asia. It is true, they drink to excess; but the ties of marriage are held sacred. None but unmarried men keep concubines, who are generally of the rank of slaves. The priests have endeavoured to stop the progress of these connections, which are always secret, by refusing to baptize the offspring of them; but they are become less rigid, since a carpenter belonging to the Company, who chose his son should be of some religion or other, took it into his head to have him circumcised.

Luxury has maintained its ground more successfully than concubinage. The ladies, who are universally ambitious of distinguishing themselves by the richness of their dress, and the magnificence of their equipage, have carried their taste for finery to excess. They never stir out without a numerous train of slaves; and either ride in magnificent cars, or are carried in superb palanquins. They wear gold or silver tissues, or fine Chinese sattins, with a net of gold thrown over them; and their head-dress is loaded with pearls and diamonds. In 1758 the government attempted to reform these extravagancies, by prescribing a mode of dress suitable to each rank. These regulations were received with contempt; means were found to elude, or to purchase an immunity from them; and no change took place. It would, indeed, have been a strange singularity, if the use of precious stones had been discontinued in the country that gave them birth; and that the Dutch had regulated a species of luxury in India, which they brought from thence with a view of introducing, or increasing it in this part of the world. The force and example of an European government struggle in vain against the laws and manners of the climate of Asia.

The heats which might naturally be expected to be excessive at Batavia, are allayed by an agreeable sea-breeze, which begins to blow every day at ten o'clock, and continues till four. The nights are rendered cool by land-breezes, which die away at day-break. It would contribute to make the air as pure as the sky is serene, if they made their canals somewhat deeper, and erected

erected sluices. Disorders are not, however, very frequent here. The mortality that prevails among the soldiers and sailors, is rather owing to debauchery, bad provisions, and fatigue, than to the intemperature of the climate.

Nothing can be more agreeable than the environs one or two leagues round the capital. The country is interspersed with delightful villas, plantations that yield an agreeable shade, and gardens finely ornamented, and even laid out with taste. It is the fashion to live there all the year, and the people in office only come to Batavia to transact public business. These charming retreats formerly owed their tranquillity to forts erected at a certain distance from one another, to prevent the incursions of the Javanese. Since these people have contracted a habit of slavery, these redoubts serve as barracks for the refreshment of the recruits, after the fatigues of a long voyage.

Batavia is situated at the bottom of a deep bay, containing several islands of a middling size, which resist the impetuosity of the sea. It is, properly speaking, a road; but is as safe a retreat from all winds, and in all seasons, as the best harbour. The only inconvenience is the difficulty of going, in stormy weather, aboard the ships that are obliged to anchor at a considerable distance. The ships undergo the necessary repairs at the small island of Onrust, which, though two leagues and a half distant, is one of those that chiefly contribute to the goodness of the road. It forms an excellent dock, is well fortified, and never without three or four hundred European carpenters; and as vessels can easily take in their lading there, magazines are erected for the reception of the larger kinds of merchandise intended for exportation. A pretty considerable river, after fertilizing the fields, and refreshing Batavia, seems to fall into the sea, on purpose to serve as a channel of communication between the town and the shipping. The lighters that are continually meeting each other in this passage, and formerly drew twelve feet water, are reduced to one half: the sands and rubbish have formed a bank, which, if suffered to increase, will prove an inconvenience, and occasion a very considerable expence.

in Batavia and the rest of the Dutch colonies; of unwrought silks, which are bought by the Company when they are in any considerable quantity, or which, when they are but few of them, are sold to those who chuse to send them to Macassar or Sumatra, where the grandees have pagnes made of them; of tea, which was formerly ingrossed by the Company, but is now given up to private traders, who send it to Europe, where it is sold by the Company, who deduct forty *per cent.* for the freight. This tea is generally of the worst sort.

The junks, which, besides the afore-mentioned articles, regularly bring two thousand Chinese to Java, who come thither in hopes of making their fortunes, carry back stags pizzles and the fins of the shark, which are reckoned among the delicacies of the table in China. Another article they receive in exchange from Batavia is tripam, to the annual amount of two thousand peculs. Each pecul, weighing a hundred and twenty-five pounds, sells from twelve to forty livres *, according to its quality. It grows only two feet from the sea, upon the barren rocks of the east, and of Cochin-China, from whence it is carried to Batavia, together with those birds nests so much celebrated all over the east, which are found in the same places. A pecul of the last mentioned merchandise sells from 1400 to 2800 livres †, and the Chinese carry away one thousand. These nests are of an oval shape, an inch high, three inches round, and weigh about half an ounce. They are formed by a species of the swallow; its head, breast, and wings, are of a fine blue, and its body milk-white. They are composed of the spawn of fish, or of a glutinous froth which the agitation of the sea leaves upon the rocks, to which they are fastened at the bottom and on the side. When seasoned with salt and spices, they make a nourishing, wholesome, and delicious jelly, which is esteemed an article of the highest luxury at the tables of the eastern Mohammedans. Their whiteness constitutes their delicacy. The Chinese likewise carry away calin and pepper, though the Company reserved the exportation of those articles to themselves. Their principal

* From 10 s. 6 d. to 1 l. 15 s. † From 61 l. 5 s. to 122 l. 10 s.

pence. It is well worth while, on account of the importance of Batavia, to pay a serious attention to every thing that may contribute to the improvement and utility of its road, which is the most important one in India.

All the vessels sent out by the Company from Europe to Asia arrive there; and, except what goes directly from Bengal and Ceylon, they are laden in their return with all the articles of those rich sales which create among us so much surprize and admiration.

The expeditions to the different sea-ports of India are hardly less, perhaps they are more considerable. European vessels are employed in this service during the unavoidable stay they are obliged to make in their remote seas.

This two-fold navigation is founded upon that which connects all the Dutch settlements with Batavia. Those that lye to the east are led, from their situation, the nature of their merchandise, and their wants, to keep up a brisker correspondence with it than the rest. But all of them are obliged to have passports. Any ship belonging to a private person, that should neglect this precaution, which was taken to prevent fraudulent trade, would be seized by the sloops that are continually cruising in these latitudes. When they arrive at the place of their destination, they deliver to the Company such of their commodities as they have reserved the exclusive trade of to themselves, and dispose of the rest to whom they please. The slave-trade constitutes one of the principal branches of the commerce last mentioned. Six thousand of both sexes are annually carried to Batavia, where they are employed in domestic service, the cultivation of the lands, or manufactures. The Chinese, who cannot bring or invite over any of their country-women, make their choice among the slaves.

To these articles of importation may be added those brought every year, by a dozen of Chinese junks, from Emoy, Limpo, and Canton. Their cargo is valued at about three million of livres *, and consists of camphire, porcelain, silk, and cotton stuffs, which are used

* 131,260 l.

principal agents pretend, for their own advantage, that these exportations are not prejudicial to the body which has intrusted its interests to their management.

The traffic of the Chinese at Batavia, besides the merchandise they export from thence, brings them in some ready money. This wealth is increased by the considerable sums that the Chinese settled at Java remit to their families, and by the sums sooner or later amassed by those who, content with their fortune, return to their own country, of which they seldom lose sight.

The Europeans are not so well treated at Batavia as the Chinese. None are admitted there as merchants but the Spaniards. Their ships come from Manilla with gold, which is the produce of the island; and with cochineal and piastres brought from Mexico. They take, in exchange, linens for their own use and that of Acapulco: but the principal article is cinnamon, the consumption of which is much increased by the general use of chocolate in the new world, and the progress it is daily making in Europe. Since the English and French have sailed to the Philippines, the former branch of this trade has considerably declined; the latter suffered a change in the year 1759. Before that time, cinnamon was sold to the Spaniards at a moderate price; but, at present, they are expected to give the same that it bears in Europe. This innovation occasions a coolness between the two colonies. The consequences of this misunderstanding have not come to our knowledge.

All we know is, that the French hardly ever go to Batavia but in time of war. They purchase rice and arrack there for the use of their ships and their settlements, and make their payments for these commodities in silver, or bills of exchange.

The English are oftener seen there. All their vessels coming from Europe to China put in at this harbour, under pretence of taking in fresh water; but in reality with a view of vending the goods, which are the property of the ship's company, consisting of cloths, hardware, glasses, arms, Madeira wines, and Portugal oils. This clandestine trade seldom exceeds a million of livres*, besides

* 43,750 l.

Besides the English vessels sent from Europe, there are three or four belonging to the same nation, which are every year fitted out for Batavia from different parts of India. They have attempted to sell opium and linens there; but have been obliged to discontinue this importation, which was too prejudicial to private interest to be permitted. Their trade is limited to the purchase of sugar, which they export to all parts; and of arrack, prodigious quantities of which are consumed in their colonies. Arrack is a kind of brandy made of rice, syrup of sugar, and cocoa-tree, which, after being fermented together, are distilled. This is one among other branches of trade, of which the Dutch by their industry have deprived the Portuguese. The art of making arrack, which was originally established at Goa, has for the most part been transferred to Batavia.

All imported or exported commodities pay this city a tax of five per cent. The revenue arising from the customs is farmed at the rate of 1,828,000 livres*. The extent of the trade must not be estimated by this rule, which, however, is always the most to be depended upon. The people in office pay what they think proper, and the Company pay nothing, as that would be paying to themselves. Though they are here, as well as in other places, the only merchants in the island, the profits arising from the productions peculiar to Batavia do not defray the expences of this celebrated mart, which amount to six millions†.

The manner of conducting the affairs of the Dutch Company in India, and in Europe.

ONE of the articles of this expence, which is undoubtedly very great, is the maintenance of a council, which gives laws to all the settlements in India; and has the sole direction of affairs. This council is composed of the governor of the Dutch Indies, the director-general, five directors in ordinary, and a small number of extraordinary counsellors, which last have no votes, and only supply the place of the deceased counsellors in ordinary till successors are appointed.

The

* 79,975 l.

† 262,500 l.

The power of nomination to these offices is vested in the direction at home. They are open to all who have money, or are relations or retainers to the governor-general. On his demise, the directors in ordinary provisionally appoint a successor, who seldom fails to be confirmed in his employment. If the contrary happens, he is not admitted into the council, but may enjoy all the honours granted to the presidents that retire.

The governor-general reports to the council the state of all affairs in the island of Java; and each councillor that of the province intrusted to his care. The director has the inspection of the chest and magazines at Batavia, which supply the rest of the settlements. All purchases and all sales are directed by him. The signature of the Company is indispensably necessary in all commercial transactions.

Though all points ought, strictly speaking, to be decided in the council by a majority of votes, the governor-general seldom fails to exercise an uncontrouled authority. This influence is owing to the care he takes to admit none but persons of inferior abilities, and to the interest they find in making their court to him, in order to advance their fortunes. If, on any occasion, he meets with an opposition that thwarts his designs, he is at liberty to take his own measures, making himself answerable for the consequences.

The governor-general, like all the rest of the officers, is appointed only for five years, but usually holds his place during life. There have formerly been instances of governors-general who have retired from business, to pass their days in tranquillity at Batavia; but the ill treatment experienced from their successors has, of late years, determined them to remain in their post till death. They formerly appeared in great state, but it was laid aside by governor-general Imhoff, as useless and troublesome. Though all orders of men may aspire to this dignity, none of the army, and but few of the gown, have been known to obtain it. It is always filled by merchants, because the spirit of the Company is entirely commercial. Those who are born in India have seldom sufficient address or abilities to procure it. The present president, however, has never been in Europe.

The salary of this principal officer is but inconsiderable ; he has no more than two thousand livres * a month, and subsistence equal to his pay. The greatest part of his income arises from the liberty allowed him of taking as much as he pleases from the magazines at prime cost, and from the liberty he assumes of trading to any extent he judges convenient. The income of the members of the council is, however, very considerable, though the Company allows them only four hundred livres † a month, and goods to the same amount.

The council meets but twice a week, unless when some extraordinary events require a more frequent attendance. They have the appointment of all civil and military employments in India, except those of the writer and serjeant, which they thought might be left, without inconvenience, at the disposal of the governors of the respective settlements. On his advancement to any post, every man is obliged to take an oath, that he has neither promised, nor given any thing to obtain his employment. This custom, which is very ancient, familiarizes people to false oaths, and proves no bar to corruption. Whoever considers the number of absurd and ridiculous oaths necessary to be taken at present in most countries, on being admitted into any society or profession whatever, will be less surprized to find that prevarication still prevails where perjury has paved the way.

All connections of commerce, not excepting that of the Cape of Good Hope, are made by the council, and the result of them always falls under their cognizance. Even the ships that sail directly from Bengal and Ceylon only carry to Europe the invoices of their cargoes. Their accompts, as well as all others, are sent to Batavia, where a general register is kept of all affairs.

The council of India is not a separate body, nor is it independent. It acts in subordination to the direction established in the United Provinces. Tho' this is, in the strict sense of the word, a direction, the care of disposing of the merchandise twice a-year is divided between six chambers concerned in this commerce. Their business is more or less according to the funds that belong to them.

The

* 87 l. 10 s.

† 17 l. 10 s.

The general assembly, which has the direction of the business of the Company, is composed of directors of all the chambers. Amsterdam nominates eight; Zealand, four; each of the other chambers, one; and the state but one. Hence we see that Amsterdam, having half the number of voices, has only one to gain to enable it to turn the scale, where every question is to be decided by a majority of votes.

This body, which is composed of seventeen persons, meets twice or thrice a-year, for six years at Amsterdam, and two at Middleburg. The other chambers are too inconsiderable to enjoy this prerogative. It having been found by experience, that success frequently depended on secret intrigues, it was proposed, about the middle of the last century, to chuse four of the most able of the seventeen deputies, and to invest them with authority to regulate all affairs in Europe and India, without the consent of their colleagues, and without being obliged even to ask their opinion.

It is true, their mysterious transactions, and the consequences of them, cannot long be kept a secret. The fleet that returns at the end of the summer brings their books of accounts regularly from India. They are compared with those in Europe. The general balance of the Company's accounts are always published in May. Every person concerned knows what he has gained or lost. The gain is commonly considerable.

The Company's fund did not at first exceed 12,919,680 livres *; Amsterdam furnished 7,349,830 †; Zealand, 2,667,764 ‡; Delft, 940,000 §; Rotterdam, 354,800 ¶; Hoorn, 533,736 ¶¶; Encluyfen, 1,073,550 ††.

This fund was divided into sums of 6000 livres †††, which were called shares. Their numbers were two thousand one hundred. The profits, however, since 1692, are divided into two thousand one hundred and thirty. It was then that the Company, who had always been protected by the House of Orange, and still stood in need

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of

* 585,236 l.	† 321,555 l. 1 s. 3 d.	‡ 116,714 l. 13 s. 6 d.
§ 41,125 l.	¶ 15,322 l. 10 s.	¶¶ 23,350 l. 19 s.
†† 46,967 l. 16 s. 3 d.	††† 264 l. 10 s.	

of its assistance, made the Stadtholder a present of a revenue of thirty shares for life.

The shares sell for ready money, or upon credit, like all sorts of merchandise. No other form is requisite than to substitute the name of the buyer for that of the seller in the Company's books, the only title by which they are held by the proprietor. Avarice, and the spirit of commerce, have invented another method of acquiring a share in this traffic. Persons who have no stock to sell, and who do not intend to buy, enter into a reciprocal engagement, that one of the parties shall deliver, and the other receive a certain number, at such a time, at a price agreed upon. On the day fixed, they compute the difference between the current price of the stocks and their value when the agreement was made; they settle the balance of the account in money, and the transaction is over. The desire of gaining, and the fear of losing by these speculations, is productive of great anxiety. They invent good or bad news; they favour or oppose the reports of others; they try to penetrate the secrets of the court, or to purchase those of foreign ministers. These clashing interests have often disturbed the public tranquillity. Matters have even been carried to such a height, that the Republic have been obliged to take measures to put a stop to the rage of stock-jobbing. The most efficacious method has been to declare all bargains of sale for time null and void, unless it appears, by the Company's books, that the seller was a proprietor at the time the bargain was made. Men of honour hold themselves obliged to fulfil their engagements notwithstanding this law: but it is natural to think, that it must, and indeed has the effect, to make these transactions less frequent.

The price of stocks, which may be looked upon as the true thermometer of the Company, has often varied. Injudicious or unsuccessful treaties, fresh competitions, accidents unavoidably attending an extensive commerce, the tranquillity or the disturbances of India, and of Europe, have occasioned these changes. For some years the standing price of stocks has been two hundred and forty per cent. more than their original value. They formerly rose as high as six hundred

dred and fifty per cent. So considerable an advance must have greatly enriched the original proprietors of these funds, and the families that inherit them: but the present purchasers seldom get more than three and a half per cent. interest for their money. This remarkable prosperity has no parallel in history. Let us try to explain the causes of it.

THE earliest success of the Company was owing to their having the good fortune, in less than half a century, to take more than three hundred Portu-

Causes of the prosperity of the Company.

guese vessels. These ships, some of which were bound for Europe, and others for different sea-ports in India, were laden with the spoils of Asia. This wealth, which the captors had the honesty not to meddle with, brought to the Company immense returns, or served to procure them. Thus the sales were very considerable, though the exports were very moderate.

The decline of the maritime power of the Portuguese encouraged the Dutch to attack the settlements belonging to that nation, and greatly facilitated the conquests of them. They found the forts strongly built, defended by a numerous artillery, and provided with every thing that government and the rich individuals of a victorious nation might naturally be supposed to have collected together for their protection. To form a just idea of this advantage, we need only consider what it has cost other nations to obtain permission to fix in an advantageous situation; to build houses, magazines, and forts; and to procure all the conveniencies necessary for their security or their commerce.

When the Company found themselves in possession of so many rich and well established settlements, they did not give way to a grasping ambition. They were desirous of extending their commerce, not their conquests. They can hardly be accused of any instances of injustice, except those that seemed necessary to secure their power. The east was no longer a scene of bloodshed, as it had been at the time when the desire of distinguishing themselves by martial exploits, and the rage

of making profelytes, gave the Portuguese a menacing air wherever they appeared in the Indies.

The Dutch seemed to have arrived rather to revenge and rescue the natives of the country, than to enslave them. They maintained no wars with them, but such as were necessary to procure settlements upon their coasts, and to oblige them to enter into treaties of commerce. It is true; these people received no advantage from them, and were deprived of a great part of their liberty; but, in other respects, their new masters, rather less barbarous than the conquerors they dispossessed, left the Indians at liberty to govern themselves, and did not compel them to change their laws, their manners, or their religion.

By their manner of posting and distributing their forces, they contrived to keep the people in awe, whom they had at first conciliated by their behaviour. If we except Cochin and Malacca, they had nothing upon the continent but factories and small forts. The islands of Java and Ceylon contained their troops and magazines: and from thence their ships maintained their authority, and protected their trade throughout the Indies.

This trade became very considerable by the spices falling into their hands, after the destruction of the Portuguese settlements. The demand for this valuable article has been more or less extensive, according to circumstances. At present they sell every year a hundred and fifty thousand pounds of cloves in India, and three hundred and fifty thousand in Europe: the price in both parts of the world is fixed at ten livres * a pound. Though the Dutch give no more than eight sols, and a few deniers † a pound, it costs them four livres, six sols ‡, on account of charges and deficiencies. India takes off no more than a hundred thousand weight of nutmegs, whereas Europe consumes two hundred and fifty thousand. It is bought at the rate of two sols, three deniers || a pound, and the necessary expences bring it to two livres, ten sols §. It sells for seven

livres, 8 s. 9 d. † About 8½ d. or 9 d. ‡ About 3 s. 9 d.

|| About 1½ d.

§ 2 s. 2½ d.

livres, ten sols *, on this side the Cape, and for no more than five livres, twelve sols †, on the other side. This difference will never induce any merchant to bring us the nutmeg; because the nuts that are sent all over Asia are shrivelled, have no oil in them, and are often rotten. Ten thousand pounds of mace is sufficient for the supply of India, a hundred thousand for that of Europe. The prime cost is sixteen sols six deniers ‡ a pound; it rises to five livres eight sols §, and is sold every where at twelve livres sixteen sols ¶. As for the cinnamon, the consumption of it in Europe does not exceed four hundred thousand weight, and in India does not amount to two hundred thousand; the greatest part of which is sent to Manilla for the use of Spanish America. It is every where sold by the Company at present at the rate of ten livres ten sols ¶ a pound, though it does not cost them twelve sols +. That which they refuse to purchase, as being too coarse, is made into oil. They make presents of it to the powers of Asia, who do not chuse to purchase it; and it sells here from about twenty to fifty or sixty livres ++ an ounce. The smell is so strong, and at the same time so agreeable, that it would be commonly, if not universally used, if the Dutch did not ask so high a price for it, it being more for their advantage to sell this spice in its original form.

We cannot conclude this important article without observing, that, in proportion as the Company's profits have decreased, they have raised the price of spices both in India and Europe. This, though in itself a bad expedient, has not injured in any great degree the sale of cloves and nutmeg, for which there is no succedaneum. But the case has been otherwise in regard to cinnamon. A spurious kind has, in several markets, been substituted for the genuine; and this branch of commerce is visibly on the decline, and will continue to be more so every day.

The Company have spared no pains to preserve the exclusive

* 6 s. 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

† 4 s. 10 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

‡ About 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

§ About 4 s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

¶ About 11 s. 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ d.

+ About 9 s. 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ d.

++ About 6 d.

--- 17 s. 6 d. to 2 l. 12 s. 6 d.

exclusive trade of pepper, which they held for some time. Though their attempts have not been quite successful, they have so far gained their point, as to maintain a considerable superiority over their competitors. The quantity they sell of this article in Europe amounts to five millions weight, and three millions five hundred weight in India. The Company purchase it, upon the whole, at thirty-six livres * a hundred weight, and sell it to us at a hundred livres †, and from forty-eight to seventy-two livres ‡ to the people of Asia.

In consequence of the sale of spices, the greatest part of the India trade must of course fall into the hands of the Dutch. The necessity of exporting them gave them an opportunity of appropriating to themselves several other branches of commerce. In process of time, they became masters of the coasting trade of Asia, as they were already of that of Europe. This navigation employed a great number of ships and sailors, who, without causing any expence to the Company, contributed to its security.

By virtue of these superior advantages, they were enabled, for a long time, to prevent the attempts of other nations to interfere in the Indian trade, or to make them abortive. The produce of this rich country came to the Europeans through the hands of the Dutch, who never experienced those restraints from their country which have in latter times been imposed every where else. The government, convinced that the proceedings of other nations neither ought nor could be a rule to direct theirs, always gave the Company leave to dispose of their merchandize at the capital freely, and without reserve. At the time this society was instituted, the United Provinces had neither any manufactures nor crude materials to work upon. It was therefore at that time no inconvenience, but rather a point of great policy, to allow, and even to encourage, the citizens to wear linens and stuffs imported from India. The various manufactures which were introduced into the republic, in consequence of the repeal of the edict of Nantz, might have induced them to lay aside the

thoughts

* 1l. 11 s. 6d. † 4l. 7 s. 6d. ‡ About 2l. 12 s. 6d. on an average.

thoughts of purchasing their cloathing from so remote a country ; but the fondness that prevailed in Europe at that time for French fashions, had given so advantageous an opening for the manufactures of the refugees, that they had not the least idea of departing from the ancient channel. Since the high price of labour, the necessary consequence of a redundancy of cash has lessened the manufactures, and obliged the nation to trade upon a frugal plan ; India stuffs have had a greater run than ever. It was thought that fewer inconveniencies would arise from enriching the Indians than the English or French, whose prosperity would not fail to hasten the ruin of a state, whose opulence is only supported by the rashness, the disputes, or indolence of other powers.

This wise conduct has retarded the decline of the Company ; but the change is at last effected, notwithstanding the flattering illusions of an imaginary prosperity. A detail of facts will set this truth in a clear light.

We have seen that the original fund of the Company, which has never been since augmented, was never more than 12,919,680 livres *. With this slender capital, they attacked the Spaniards and Portuguese in the Indian seas, gained conquests over these, then warlike nations, and over the people of Asia, whose numbers, at least, rendered them formidable: they formed magazines, built cities, and erected forts without number, and established or supported their commerce by force of arms. These amazing expences lasted from its first institution till the year 1665, the æra when all their acquisitions were made, all their settlements formed. During this long and restless period, the annual returns amounted to twenty and three-fourths per cent.

The Company had afterwards no occasion to send one fleet after another into the east, to assert the dominion of those seas, to raise new armies to subdue or awe their enemies, or to lavish their blood and treasure in securing their possessions. Their operations were only those of a brisk and advantageous commerce, and consequently

sequently their dividend, till the year 1728, increased to about three and twenty per cent. It has since that time gradually fallen to twenty, fifteen, and even lower. We foresee a still farther reduction. It is necessary to state the reasons of this conjecture.

It is demonstrated, that at the closing of the books in 1751, the capital of the Company in India did not amount to more than 117,400,000 livres *, the fleet that was on its way to Europe cost 19,200,000 †, and the vessels fitted out for India 3,000,000 of livres ‡. They had a debt of 14,000,000 of livres § in India, and were 22,400,000 livres || in arrears in Europe. Consequently the stock of the Company, exclusive of their fortifications, did not exceed 56,800,000 livres ¶.

Of this sum, inconsiderable as it was, there were only 23,400,000 livres + in commercial effects; that is to say, ready money, merchandize, and good debts. The remainder consisted of bad debts to the amount of three millions ++, and of doubtful ones to the amount of 6,600,000 livres ∞; 8,000,000 livres = allotted for provision for the table; 1,400,000 ≡ for brass cannon; for iron ordnance, bullets, and balls, 500,000 **; for muskets and ammunition 1,800,000 ††; for plate 200,000 ‡‡; for slaves 300,000 §§; for cattle and horses 200,000 |||; and for goods entered from different parts of India for Batavia 11,200,000 livres †.

It remains to examine what profits the Company have been able to make with so weak a capital. Their gains, as far as it is possible to compute them, annually amount to 25,400,000 livres ‡‡, but their ordinary expences amount to 18,600,000 §; and their dividend, supposing it to be twenty-five per cent. to 3,330,000 ≡; consequently they have only 470,000 livres ∞ remaining, to defray the expence of war, the loss of their magazines by fire, or their vessels by sea, and all that train of evils which human prudence can neither foresee nor prevent. The

* 5,136,250 l.	+ 840,000 l.	‡ 131,250 l.	§ 612,500 l.
980,000 l.	¶ 2,485,000 l.	+ 1,023,750 l.	++ 131,250 l.
∞ 288,750 l.	= 350,000 l.	≡ 61,250 l.	** 21,875 l.
†† 78,750 l.	‡‡ 8,750 l.	§§ 13,125 l.	8,750 l.
‡‡ 1,111,250 l.	§§ 813,750 l.	≡ 145,687 l.	10 s.
∞ 20,562 l.	10 s.		

This state of the matter must appear to those who see things only at a distance, to have so little probability, that we should not have ventured to warrant the truth of it, if we had not before us governor general Mossel's correspondence with the direction *. This discerning and able administrator considers the Company as an exhausted body, that is sustained by cordials: "It is," as he expresses himself, "a leaky vessel, that is kept from foundering only by the pump."

This deplorable situation, which will reduce the Company to the necessity of borrowing money upon their capital, or of lessening their dividend still more, if any new misfortune should happen, must have had its causes, and those too very considerable. The most obvious of all is the multitude of petty wars which have followed each other without interruption.

THE inhabitants of the Moluccas had scarce recovered from the astonishment into which they had been thrown by the victories gained by the Dutch, over a people whom they looked upon as invincible, when they grew impatient of the yoke. The Company, dreading the consequences of this discontent, made war upon the king of Ternate, to oblige him to consent to the extirpation of the clove-tree every where except in Amboyna. The islanders in Banda were utterly exterminated, because they refused to become their slaves. Macassar, in order to support their interests, kept up a considerable force for a long time. The loss of Formosa brought on the ruin of the factories of Tonkin and Siam. They were obliged to take up arms to support the exclusive trade of Sumatra. Malacca was besieged, its territory ravaged, and its navigation interrupted by pirates. Negapatan was twice attacked; Cochin was engaged in resisting the attempts of the kings of Calicut and Travancor; Ceylon has been a scene of perpetual disturbances;

*Reasons of
the decline of
the Company.*

* This great merchant, and the most intelligent perhaps who ever was in India, made it only amount to 600,000 florins, which we have reduced to 250,000, and he is accused by his superiors of exaggeration.

ances; which are full as frequent, and still more violent at Java, where peace can never continue long, unless the Company will give a reasonable price for the commodities they require. They have engaged in bloody contests with an European nation, whose power in India increases every day, and whose character is not that of moderation. All these wars have proved ruinous; more ruinous indeed than might have been expected, because those who had the management of them only sought opportunities of enriching themselves.

These notorious dissensions have in many places been followed by odious oppressions, which have been practised at Japan, China, Cambodia, Arrackan, on the banks of the Ganges, at Achem, Coromandel, Surat in Persia, at Bassora, Mocho, and other places. The greatest part of the countries in India are filled with tyrants, who prefer piracy to commerce, who acknowledge no right but that of power, and think that whatever is practicable is just.

The profits accruing to the Company from the places where their trade met with no interruption, for a long time counterbalanced the losses they sustained in others by tyranny or anarchy; but other European nations deprived them of this indemnification. This competition obliged them to buy dearer, and to sell cheaper. Their natural advantages might, perhaps, have enabled them to support this misfortune, if their rivals had not determined to throw the home-trade of India into the hands of private merchants. By this expression we are to understand the transporting the merchandise of one country in Asia to another country in the same quarter of the globe; from China, Bengal, and Surat, for instance, to the Philippines, Persia, and Arabia. By means of this circulation, and by a multiplicity of exchanges, the Dutch obtained, for nothing, or for a trifle, the rich cargoes they brought to Europe. The activity, oeconomy, and skill of the free merchants, drove the Company from all the sea-ports where equal favour was shewn. Their flag was seldom seen in the roads, where eight or ten English vessels appeared.

This revolution, which so clearly pointed out to them what steps they had to take, did not set them right with respect

respect to a measure that was destructive to trade. They had been accustomed to carry all their Indian and European merchandise to Batavia, from whence it was distributed among the different factories, who sold it to advantage. This custom occasioned expence and loss of time, the inconveniencies of which were not perceived while their profits were so enormous. When other nations carried on a direct trade, it became indispensably necessary to relinquish a system, not only bad in itself, but incompatible with circumstances. The dominion of custom, however, still prevails: and it is said to be owing to the Company's apprehensions that their servants would make an ill use of any innovation, that they did not adopt a measure, the necessity of which was so fully demonstrated.

This motive was probably nothing more than a pretext which served as a cover to private interest. The frauds of the commissaries were more than winked at. The principal ones had, for the most part, been exact in their conduct. They were under the direction of admirals, who visited all the factories, were invested with absolute powers in India, and, at the conclusion of every voyage, sent an account to Europe of their administration. In proportion, however, as the government became less active, the agents, who were not so strictly watched, grew more remiss. They abandoned themselves to effeminacy, a habit of which is easily contracted in hot countries. The number of these persons was obliged to be increased; and no one made a capital point of correcting an abuse, which gave the people in power an opportunity of providing for their dependents. They went to Asia with a view of making a considerable fortune in a short time. Being prohibited from trading, their appointments not being sufficient to maintain them, and all honest ways of enriching themselves being shut up against them, they had recourse to malpractices. The Company were cheated in all their affairs by factors who had no interest in their prosperity. These disorders grew to such a height, that it was proposed to allow a premium of five per cent. upon all commodities sold or bought, which was to be divided among all the servants according to their ranks. Upon

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these terms they were obliged to take an oath that their account was just. This arrangement lasted but five years; it being found that corruption prevailed as much as ever: the premium and the oath were abolished; and, from this period, the agents ask any consideration for their trouble to which their avarice may prompt them.

The contagion which at first infected the lower factories gradually reached the principal settlements, and, at last, Batavia itself. So great a simplicity prevailed there at first, that the members of the government usually dressed like common sailors, and never wore decent clothes but in their council-chamber. This modesty was accompanied with so distinguished a probity, that, before the year 1650, not one remarkable fortune had been made; but this unheard-of prodigy of virtue could not be of long duration. We have seen warlike republics conquer and make acquisitions for their country, and fill the public treasury with the spoils of kingdoms: but we shall never see the citizens of a commercial republic amass riches, for a particular body in the state, from which they derive neither glory nor profit. The austerity of republican principles must of course give place to the example of the people of the east. This relaxation of manners was more sensibly perceived in the capital of the colony, where the articles of luxury that came from all parts, and the air of magnificence it was thought necessary to throw round the administration, introduced a taste for shew. This taste occasioned a corruption of manners, which made all methods of getting money alike indifferent. Even the appearance of decency was so far disregarded, that a governor-general, finding himself convicted of plundering the finances without mercy, made no scruple of justifying his conduct, by shewing a *carte blanche* signed by the Company.

How could the conduct of the governors be remedied, when their depravation could not be foreseen in the infancy of the republic, where a purity of manners and frugality prevailed? In these settlements of the Dutch, the laws had been made for virtuous men; other manners required other laws.

These disorders might have been repressed in their first

first beginnings, if they had not naturally made the same progress in Europe as in Asia: but, as a river that overflows its banks collects more mud than water in its passage, so the vices which riches bring along with them increase faster than riches themselves. The post of director, which was at first allotted to able merchants, was at length vested in great families, where it is held with the magistracies, by virtue of which it was first procured. These families, engaged in political views, or in the service of administration, considered the posts, which they had ravished from the Company, only in the light of a considerable income, or an easy provision for their relations; some of them even as opportunities of making a bad use of their credit. The business of receiving accounts, hearing debates, and carrying on the most important transactions of the Company, was left to a secretary, who, under the plausible title of advocate, became the sole manager of all the affairs. The governors, who met but twice a-year, in spring and autumn, at the arrival and departure of the fleets, forgot the habit and track of all business, which requires a constant attention. They were obliged to repose an entire confidence in a person appointed by the state, to make extracts from all the dispatches that arrived from India, and to draw up the form of the answers that were to be returned. This guide, who was sometimes incapable, often bribed, and always suspicious, frequently led those he had the conducting of to the brink of a precipice where he left them to fall.

The spirit of commerce arises from interest, and interest always occasions disputes. Each chamber wanted to have docks, arsenals, and magazines, for the ships they were to fit out. Offices accordingly were multiplied, and frauds were encouraged.

It was a maxim in every department, to furnish goods, as it had a right to do, in proportion to its armaments. These goods were not alike proper for the places for which they were destined, and were either not sold at all, or sold to disadvantage.

When circumstances called for extraordinary supplies, a spirit of puerile vanity, which is afraid of betraying its weakness by confessing its wants, led them

to avoid borrowing money in Holland, where they would have paid only an interest of three per cent. and to have recourse to Batavia, where money was at six; or more frequently to Bengal, or the coast of Coromandel, where it was nine per cent. and sometimes much higher. Abuses were multiplied on all sides.

The States-general, whose business it was to examine every three years into the state of the Company, to satisfy themselves that they kept within the limits assigned by their grant; to see that justice was administered to the persons concerned, and that the trade was carried on in a manner that was not prejudicial to the republic; might, and ought to have put a stop to these irregularities. Whatever their reasons might be, this was never done. In consequence of this behaviour, they had the mortification to see the proprietors unite in conferring upon the last Stadtholder the supreme direction of their affairs in Europe and India; without being aware of the danger that might result from the influence that a perpetual president of the state must have over a rich and powerful body. Notwithstanding this, the dividend is at present larger, and the price of stocks higher. A certain premature death has drawn a veil over the plan of reformation that had been concerted. Necessity will oblige them to resume it, with such wise precautions, no doubt, as may prevent the abuse of that power against which they think themselves bound to protest.

Measures that remain to be taken for the re-establishment of the Company's affairs.

THE first step must be, to convince themselves that the government of the Company is too complicated even in Europe. A direction vested in so many chambers, and in such a number of directors, must be attended with infinite inconveniencies. It is impossible that the same spirit should operate every where alike, and that the transactions should be carried on without receiving a tincture from the opposite views of the persons who conduct them in different places, without concert or connection. Unity of design, so necessary in the fine arts, is equally advantageous in business. It

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will be in vain objected, that it is the interest of all democratical states to divide their wealth, and to make the estates of the citizens as equal as possible. This maxim, in itself true, is not applicable to a republic that has no territory, and maintains itself merely by its commerce. It will therefore be expedient that every article bought or sold should fall under one general inspection, and be brought into one port. The savings that would be made, would be the least advantage the Company would receive from this alteration.

From this place, which would be the center of intelligence from all quarters, deputations might be sent to inquire into, and correct abuses in the remotest parts of Asia. The conduct of the Dutch towards the Indian princes, from whom they have forcibly extorted an exclusive commerce, will be one of the first objects of their consideration. They have, for a long time, behaved towards them with an insolent pride; have attempted to learn the secrets of their government, and to engage them in quarrels with their neighbours; they have fomented divisions among their subjects, and shewn a distrust mixed with animosity; they have obliged them to make sacrifices which they never promised, and deprived them of advantages secured to them by the terms of capitulation. All these intolerable acts of tyranny occasion frequent disturbances, which sometimes end in hostilities. To restore harmony, which is a task that grows more necessary and more difficult every day, agents should be appointed, who, to a spirit of moderation, join a knowledge of the interests, customs, language, religion, and manners of these nations. At present, perhaps, the Company may be upprovided with persons of this character; but it concerns them to procure them. Perhaps too they might find them among the superintendents of their factories, which they have every reason to induce them to abandon.

The discerning part of the merchants of all nations unanimously agree, that the Dutch settlements in India are too numerous; and that, by lessening their number, they would greatly reduce their expences, without abridging their commerce. The Company cannot possibly be ignorant of what is so generally known. One would

would be apt to think they were induced to continue the factories that were expensive to them, to prevent a suspicion that they were not in a condition to maintain them. But this weak consideration should sway them no longer. All that deserves their attention is, to make a due distinction between what is convenient to part with, and advantageous to retain. They have before them a series of facts, and experiments, which must prevent any mistake in an arrangement of such importance.

In the subordinate factories, which they may think proper to continue for the advantage of trade, they will demolish all useless fortifications; they will dissolve the councils established out of ostentation rather than necessity; and they will proportion the number of their servants to the extent of their business. Let the Company call to mind those happy times, when two or three factors, chosen with judgment, sent out cargoes infinitely more considerable than any they have received since; when they gained amazing profits upon their goods, which, in process of time, have been pocketed by their numerous agents; and then they will not hesitate a moment to return to their old maxims, and prefer a simplicity which made them rich, to an empty parade that ruins them. These disorders were owing to their own misconduct. The Europeans, settled in their colonies, lived in disgrace, if they were not engaged in their service. Every expedient was tried to extricate themselves from a state of humiliation which it was impossible to endure. The superintendents suffered themselves to be corrupted; and employments were multiplied without necessity and without measure. Let them discountenance a prejudice, which, in whatever light it is viewed, is unjust and pernicious; and the reformation we are pointing out will easily be accomplished.

It will be attended with greater difficulties in the large colonies. The Company's agents there are a more numerous, reputable, and, in proportion, a more opulent body, and consequently less disposed to submit to any regulations. It is, however, necessary to reduce them to order: since the abuses they have either introduced, or winked at, must sooner or later inevitably bring on the ruin of the interests over which they preside. The

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mismanagement that prevails in the work-shops, magazines, docks, and arsenals at Batavia, and other large settlements, is scarcely to be paralleled. The mal-practices of the superintendents and subordinate officers are so notorious, that, according to the most favourable representations, at least two-thirds might be saved, if the buildings, works, and repairs were executed by contract.

These arrangements would lead to others still more considerable. At their first rise, the Company established fixed and precise rules, which were not to be departed from, on any pretence, or on any occasion whatsoever. Their servants were mere machines, the smallest movements of which were wound up before-hand. They judged this absolute and universal direction necessary to correct what was amiss in the choice of their agents, who were most of them drawn out of obscurity, and had not the advantage of that careful education which would have enlarged their ideas. The Company themselves did not suffer the least variation in their own conduct; and to this invariable uniformity they attributed the success of their enterprizes. The frequent misfortunes which this system occasioned, did not prevail with them to lay it aside; and they always adhered obstinately to their first plan. In this they were not guided by reflection, but followed a blind impulse. Now, when they can no longer commit errors with impunity, it is necessary they should make some alterations. Tired of maintaining a disadvantageous struggle with the free traders of other nations, they should resolve to leave the commerce from one part of India to another, to private persons. This happy innovation would make their colonies richer and more powerful. They themselves would reap more advantage from the customs that would be paid in their factories, than they receive from the faint efforts of an expiring commerce. Every thing, even the ships that are too old to be sent to Europe, would turn to account. The navigators in these settlements would be glad to make use of them in those calm seas.

Perhaps the Company might carry the plan of reformation still further. Would it not be a proper scheme to resign the trade of linens exported to Europe to individuals?

dividuals? Those who are acquainted with their operations, know very well that they gain no more than thirty per cent. by this article; which is always sold to them at a dear rate by their agents, tho' it is bought with their own money. If we deduct from this profit, the averages, the interest of advance-money, the salaries of the commissaries, and the hazards at sea, the remainder will be very trifling. Would not twenty per cent. freight, which the free merchants would readily give, be of greater advantage to the Company?

They would then be released from the cares and restraints of their present commerce, and the port of Batavia would be open to all nations, who would load their ships with the merchandise of Europe, with the goods bought by the Company, at a low price, of the Indian princes, with whom they carry on an exclusive trade, and with the spices destined for all the sea-ports in Asia, where the consumption would necessarily increase: the sacrifice they would make to the general freedom of trade would be amply rewarded, by the certain, easy, and advantageous sale of spices in Europe: the progress of corruption would be stopt, by adhering to so plain a rule of administration; and order would be established on such firm grounds, that it would require but little care to preserve it.

The necessity of making the internal arrangements we propose, is so much the more urgent, as the Company are in imminent danger of losing the constituent part of their power, and of having the spice-trade taken from them.

It is confidently reported, that the clove-tree is no longer to be found any where but at Amboyna; but this is a mistake. Before the Dutch got possession of the Moluccas, properly so called, all the islands in this Archipelago were covered with these trees. They ordered them to be pulled up, and continue to send two sloops, each having twelve soldiers on board, with orders to destroy them wherever they appear. But not to lay any stress here upon the baseness of such avarice, which counteracts the bounty of nature, these extirpators, with all their industry, can only execute their commission upon the coast. Were three hundred men

to be continually employed in traversing the forests, they would not be able fully to answer the intention of their employers. The earth rebels against this devastation, and seems to resist the wickedness of men. The clove springs up under the instrument that destroys it, and mocks the unfeeling industry of the Dutch, who wish to see nothing grow but for themselves. The English that are settled at Sumatra have, for some years, sent cloves to their mother-country, which they obtain from the inhabitants of Bally, who gather them in places where it is pretended they no longer exist.

It is equally a mistake that the nutmeg-tree is confined to Banda: it grows in New Guinea, and in the islands that lye near that coast. The Malays, the only people who held any correspondence with these fierce nations, have carried the produce of this tree to Batavia. The precautions that have been taken to conceal the knowledge of this fact have only served the more fully to confirm it; and its truth is supported by so many attestations, that it is impossible to entertain a doubt of it.

If, however, the certainty of these facts should be called in question; if either habit or tradition should make it believed that the Spaniards settled at the Philippines could not with great advantage to themselves easily procure the clove and nutmeg-tree, it must, on all hands, be acknowledged, that, in these remote seas, an event has happened which merits a serious attention. The strait of Lombock has been discovered by the English: in consequence of this discovery, they have penetrated as far as Saffra, which lyes between New Guinea and the Molucca islands. This island is found to be in the same latitude, to have the same soil, and the same climate, with those that produce the spices; and they have formed a settlement upon it. Is it credible, that this active and persevering nation will lose sight of the only object they can propose to themselves from this situation? or that they will be discouraged by the obstacles they meet with? Could we suppose the Company so little acquainted with the character of their rivals, their situation would no longer be doubtful; it would be desperate.

Setting

Setting aside this contest between trading interests, the Dutch have reason to be apprehensive of one of a slower and more destructive kind. All circumstances, particularly their manner of conducting their forces both by sea and land, conspire to invite their enemies to attack them.

The Company have a fleet of about a hundred ships, from six hundred to a thousand tons burthen. Twenty-eight or thirty are annually sent out from Europe, and a smaller number returns. Those that are not in a condition to return make voyages in India, where the seas, except those in the neighbourhood of Japan, are so calm, that weaker vessels may sail in them with safety. In times of profound peace, the ships sail separately; but on their return, they always form two fleets at the Cape, which come by the Orcades, where two ships of war belonging to the Republic wait to convoy them to Holland. In time of war, this round about passage was contrived to avoid the enemy's privateers; and they continue to make use of it in time of peace, to prevent contraband trade. It was found difficult to procure sailors who would encounter the cold blasts of the north, after being used to hot climates; but this difficulty was surmounted, by offering two months pay extraordinary. This custom has been continued, even when contrary winds or storms drove the fleets into the channel. The chamber of Amsterdam once made an attempt to suppress this custom; but they were in danger of being burnt by the populace, who, like the rest of the nation, disapproved of the arbitrary proceedings of the Company, and lamented their exclusive privilege. The Company's navy is commanded by officers who were originally sailors or cabin-boys; they may be qualified for pilots, and for working a ship, but have not the least notion of naval evolutions. Besides, from the defects of their education, they can have no idea of the love of glory, or of inculcating it into that class of men who are under their command.

Their conduct is still worse with regard to their land-force. Soldiers who have deserted from every nation in Europe, may, indeed, be expected not to want courage; but their provision and cloathing are so bad,
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and they are so much harrassed, that they have great aversion to the service. The officers, who were, for the most part, originally bred to some low profession, in which they got a sum sufficient to purchase their posts, are by no means cut out to inspire them with a military spirit. The contempt in which a people purely commercial held those whose situation dooms them to an involuntary poverty, together with their aversion from war, contributes greatly to degrade and dispirit them. To these several causes of their inactivity, weakness, and want of discipline, may be subjoined another, which is equally applicable both to the land and sea-service.

There is not, perhaps, in the most despotic governments, so dishonourable and iniquitous a mode of raising seamen and foldiers, as that which has, for a long time, been practised by the Company. Their agents, called by the people *vendeurs d'ames* (kidnappers,) who are always busy in the territories, and even beyond the boundaries of the Republic, make it their employment to entice credulous men to embark for India, in hopes of making a considerable fortune in a short time. Those who are allured by the bait are inrolled, and receive two months pay, which is always given to their betrayer. They enter into an engagement of three hundred livres *, which is the profit of the person that enlists them, who is obliged by this agreement to furnish them with some clothes, worth about a tenth part of that sum. The debt is secured by one of the Company's bills; but it is never paid unless the debtor lives long enough to discharge it out of his pay.

A Company which supports itself, in spite of that contempt which it has ever entertained for the military profession, and with soldiers so corrupted, should enable us to determine the progress which the arts of negotiation have made in these later ages. It has ever been necessary to supply the want of strength by treaties, by patience, by moderation, and by artifice; but republicans should be well informed, that such a state can only be a precarious one, and that political measures,

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* 13 l. 2 s. 6 d.

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how well soever they may be combined, are not always able to resist the torrent of violence and the necessity of circumstances. The Company should have troops composed of citizens, which is by no means impossible; for it never can inspire that public spirit, that enthusiasm for glory, which itself does not possess. In this respect, it is the same with a company as with a government, which should form its troops upon those principles only that are the basis of its own constitution. Oeconomy, and the desire of gain, are the principles of administration adopted by the Company. These are the motives that should attach the soldier to their service. As he is engaged in commercial expeditions, he should be assured of a reward proportioned to the means he hath exerted in forwarding their success, and his pay should be made out to him in stock. Then personal interests, far from weakening the general intentions, will only serve to strengthen them.

If these reflections should not prevail upon the Company to alter this important part of their administration, let them, at least, be awakened by the prospect of the dangers that threaten them. If they were attacked in India, they would be deprived of their settlements there in less time than it has taken them to wrest them from the Portuguese. Their best towns have neither covert-ways, nor glacis, nor outworks, and would not hold out a week. They are never stocked with provisions, though they are always filled with warlike stores. There are not more than ten thousand men, whites and blacks, to defend them, and there should be double that number. These disadvantages would not be compensated by the resources of the navy. The Company has not a single vessel of the line in all its ports, and it would be impossible to arm the merchantmen as ships of war. The largest of those that return to Europe have not one hundred men; and if the men dispersed in all the ships that sail to India were collected, there would not be a sufficient number to form one single ship's crew. Any man accustomed to calculate probable events, would not scruple to say, that the power of the Dutch might be annihilated in Asia before the state could come to the assistance of the Company. The only basis upon which

which this apparently gigantic Colossus is fixed, is the Molucca islands. Six men of war, however, and fifteen hundred land-forces would be more than sufficient to secure the conquest of them; and this might be effected either by the French or the English.

If the French should form this enterprize, their squadron might sail from the isle of France, and bear down upon Ternate, where a commencement of hostilities would give the first intelligence of its arrival in those seas. A fort without outworks, and which might be battered from the ships, would make but a short resistance. Amboyna, which formerly had a rampart, a bad ditch, and four small bastions, has been so frequently demolished by earthquakes, that it cannot be in a condition to put a stop to an enterprising enemy for two days. Banda has its peculiar difficulties. There is no bottom round these islands, and there are such violent currents, that, if two or three channels which lead up to it were missed, the vessels would be unavoidably carried away under the wind. But this might be easily prevented by the pilots of Amboyna. There is nothing more to attack than a wall without a ditch, or a covert-way, defended only by four bastions in bad condition. The small fort, erected upon an eminence that commands the place, could not defend itself four and twenty hours.

All those who have seen the Moluccas, and examined them attentively, agree, that they would not hold out one month against the forces we have mentioned. If, as it is probable, the garrisons, which are not half so numerous as they ought to be, and are besides exasperated at the manner in which they are treated, should refuse to fight, or should make but a feeble resistance, the conquest would be more rapid. To secure it as firmly as it deserves, it would be necessary to take possession of Batavia; a circumstance not so difficult as it may seem to be. The squadron, with the soldiers that were not left in garrison, and as many of the Dutch troops as should have joined the conqueror, with a timely reinforcement of eight or nine hundred men, would infallibly accomplish this enterprize, of which we shall be convinced, if we have a just idea of Batavia.

The most common obstacle to the besieging of maritime places is the difficulty of landing, which is by no means the case at the capital of Java. Governor general Imhoff, who was apprized of this circumstance, attempted in vain to remedy it, by constructing a fort at the mouth of the river, which embellishes the city. If these works, erected at a great expence by persons of no skill, had even been brought to perfection, they would not have much improved the situation: the landing, which would have been made impracticable in one place, would always have been open by means of several rivers that empty themselves into the road, and are all navigable by sloops.

The troops being once formed upon land, would find nothing but an immense city without a covert-way, defended by a rampart, and by some low and irregular bastions, surrounded by a ditch; formed on one side by a river, and on the other by some marshy canals, which might easily be filled with running water: it was formerly defended by a citadel; but Imhoff, by building between the city and this fortress some extensive and high barracks, intercepted the communication. He was afterwards told of this blunder, and he could think of no better way of rectifying it, than to demolish two half-bastions of the fortress looking towards the city. Since that time they have been joined to each other.

But if the fortifications were as perfect as they are bad; if the artillery, which is immense, were directed by men of judgment; if even Cohorn or Vauban were substituted in the room of those unskilful persons who have now the charge of the works, the place could not hold out. It would require at least four thousand men to defend it, and there are seldom more than six hundred. Neither, indeed, are the Dutch so ignorant as to place their confidence in so feeble a garrison: they depend much more upon the inundations they are able to raise by opening the sluices that confine several small rivers. They imagine that these inundations would retard the operations of the siege, and would destroy the besiegers by the distempers they would occasion. With a little more reflection they would discover, that the place must surrender before these drainings had taken effect.

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The plan of conquest that France might form, would equally suit the interests of Great Britain; with this difference, that the English would, in the first place, make themselves masters of the Cape of Good Hope, an excellent harbour, which they are in want of for their voyages to the Indies.

The Cape may be attacked in two places: the first is Table Bay, at the extremity of which the fort is situated. It is an open road, where the violence of the sea is broken only by a small island, and is so bad in the months of June, July, August, and September, that in 1722 twenty-five ships were lost there, and seven in 1736. Though all navigators prefer it in the other seasons of the year, on account of the accommodations they find there, it is probable that a landing would not be attempted here, because the two sides of the harbour are covered with batteries, which it would be hazardous, and, perhaps, impossible to silence. False Bay would undoubtedly be preferable, which though at thirty leagues distance from the former by sea, is yet no more than three leagues from the capital on the land-side. The landing would not be effected quietly in this place of security, and the troops would gain, without opposition, an eminence which commands the fort. As this citadel, in other respects confined, is only defended by a garrison of three or four hundred men at most, it might be reduced in less than a day's time by a few bombs. The inhabitants of the colony, dispersed throughout an immense space, and separated from each other by desarts, would not have time to come to its relief. Perhaps they would not, if it were even in their power. We may be allowed to suppose that the oppression under which they groan may make them wish for a change of government. The loss of the Cape would, perhaps, render it impossible for the Company to convey to India the succours necessary for the defence of their settlements, or would at least make those succours less certain and more expensive. The English, on the contrary, would draw great conveniencies, even immense advantages from this conquest, if the spirit of monopoly, which reason and humanity will always oppose, could once be laid aside.

The British colonies of North America have iron, wood, rice, sugar, and a hundred other articles of consumption, which the Cape is entirely without. They might be conveyed thither, and wines and brandy received in exchange. The soil and climate of this part of Africa are so favourable to the cultivation of the vine, that an immense extent of land may be allotted to it. If a regular consumption could be established, we should soon see a space of two hundred leagues covered with vineyards. Toleration, the mildness of the government, and the prospect of a comfortable situation, would attract cultivators from all quarters. They would soon be in a condition to furnish wholesome and agreeable liquors in plenty to British America; and, perhaps, the metropolis itself might one day supply itself with wine from the same plentiful source, which is unwillingly purchases from France.

If the republic of Holland should not consider as imaginary the dangers to which our love of the general good of nations makes us apprehend her commerce may be exposed, she ought to omit no precaution to prevent them. She must constantly keep in mind, that the Company, from its beginning in the year 1722, has received about fifteen hundred ships, the cargoes of which amount in India to 703,366,000 livres *, and have been sold in Europe for double that sum; that by sending 6,000,000 of livres † into India, annual returns of 40,000,000 ‡ are procured, only the fifth part of which at most is consumed in the United Provinces; that, at the renewal of each grant, the Company has given considerable sums to the republic; that it has assisted the state whenever it has stood in need of assistance; that it has raised a multitude of private fortunes, which have prodigiously increased the riches of the nation; in short, that it has doubled, perhaps, trebled the activity of the metropolis, by furnishing it with frequent opportunities of forming great enterprizes.

The Company customarily pay to the state duties of import for all the merchandise they receive from India. By a regulation of the 10th of July 1677, they

* 30,772,262 l. 10 s.

* 262,500 l.

‡ 1,750,000 l.

are annually to pay thirty-two thousand livres * in lieu of the duties of export. They obtained the renewal of their grant in 1743, with this formal stipulation, that the republic should receive three per cent. upon the dividend. It is thought, however, that the government have a right to derive greater advantages from an exclusive privilege of such importance.

It has always been acknowledged by all nations, whatever the form of their government might be, that the estates acquired in any country ought to contribute to the expences of government. The reason of this grand maxim is evident to all capacities. Private fortunes are so essentially connected with the prosperity of the public, that, when that is injured, the others must suffer of course. Thus, when the subjects of a state serve it with their fortunes or their persons, they do nothing but defend their own private interest. The prosperity of the country is the prosperity of each citizen. This maxim, which is true in all governments, has a particular propriety when applied to free societies.

There are besides, bodies of men, whose interest, either from their nature, their extensive relations, or the variety of their views, are more essentially connected with the common interest. Of this kind is the India Company in Holland. The enemies to its trade are enemies to the republic; and its security is established on the same basis with that of the state.

In the opinion of men of the best discernment, the national debt has sensibly weakened the United Provinces, and affected the general welfare, by gradually increasing the load of taxes. The republic can never be restored to its original splendour, till it is released from the enormous burthen under which it groans; and this relief can only be expected from a Company, which it has always encouraged, protected, and favoured. To place this powerful body in a situation to render the highest services to the country, it will by no means be necessary to reduce the profits of the proprietors; it will be sufficient to bring it back to those principles of economy and simplicity, and to that plan of administration, which laid the foundation of its early prosperity. A

* 1,400 L

*Former good
conduct of the
Dutch, and their
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A reformation so necessary will admit of no delay; and this confidence is due to a government, which has always endeavoured to maintain a great number of citizens within itself, and to employ only a small part of them in its distant settlements. It is at the expence of all Europe that Holland has continually increased the number of its subjects: the liberty of conscience allowed there, and the moderation of the laws, have attracted all persons who were oppressed in a hundred different places by a spirit of intoleration and the severity of government.

The republic has procured means of subsistence to all persons who have been willing to settle and work among them: we have seen at different times the inhabitants of a country ruined by war, seeking security and employment in Holland.

Agriculture could never be a considerable object in Holland, although the land is cultivated to as great a degree of perfection as possible. But the herring-fishery supplies the place of agriculture. This is a new method of subsistence, a school for seamen. Born upon the waters, they plough the sea, from whence they get their food: they grow familiar with storms, and learn without risk to overcome dangers.

The traffic of transport which the republic continually carries on from one European nation to another, is also a kind of navigation, which, without destroying men, supplies them with subsistence by labour.

In short, navigation, which depopulates a part of Europe, peoples Holland. It is as it were the produce of the country. Her ships are her landed estates, which she makes the most of, at the expence of the stranger.

The elegant accommodations of life are known in Holland, without being an object of pursuit: the refinements of behaviour are adopted with moderation; those of caprice they are unacquainted with. A spirit of order, frugality, and even avarice, prevails throughout the nation, and has been carefully kept up by the government.

The colonies are conducted by the same spirit. They are peopled in general with the scum of the nation, or

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with foreigners ; but rigid laws, an equitable administration, an easy subsistence, and useful labour, soon infuse morals into those men who were exiled from Europe for their crimes.

The same design of preserving the population prevails in the military system ; the republic entertains a great number of foreign troops in Europe, and some in the colonies.

The sailors in Holland are well paid ; and foreign seamen are constantly employed, either on board their trading vessels, or their men of war.

For the purposes of commerce, it is necessary that harmony should be preserved at home, and peace abroad. No people, except the Swiss, take more care than the Dutch to keep on good terms with their neighbours ; and they endeavour, still more than the Swiss, to encourage peace among them.

The republic preserves unanimity among her citizens, by very excellent laws, which prescribe the duties of every station, by a speedy and disinterested administration of justice, and by regulations admirably well adapted to the merchants. She has shewn the opinion she entertains of the necessity of good faith by her observance of treaties, and has endeavoured to inculcate the same principle among individuals.

In a word, we know of no nation in Europe that has considered better what its united advantages of situation, strength, and population allows it to undertake, or that has known and followed more effectually the means of increasing both its population and its strength. We know of none, which, having such objects as an extensive commerce and liberty, mutually attracting and supporting each other, hath conducted itself in a better manner for the preservation of both the one and the other.

But how are these manners already changed and degenerated from the purity of a republican government ? Personal interests, which become laudable by being combined, are now totally selfish, and corruption is become general. There is no patriotism in that country, which, above all others in the universe, should inspire its inhabitants with the firmest attachments. In reality, what

what patriotic sentiments might we not expect from a nation that can say to itself, "This land which I inhabit has been fertilized by me; 'tis I who have embellished, who have created it. This threatening sea, which deluged all our plains, rages in vain against the powerful dykes I have opposed to its fury. I have purified this air which stagnant waters had filled with fatal exhalations. It is by my means that superb cities stand now upon the slime and mud over which the ocean once rolled its waves. The ports I have constructed, the canals I have digged, receive the productions of the whole universe, which I dispense at pleasure. The inheritances of other nations are only possessions which man disputes with man; that which I shall leave to my posterity, I have ravished from the elements which conspired against my territory, and am now the master of it. It is here that I have established a new arrangement of nature, a new system of manners. I have done every thing where there was nothing. Air, land, government, liberty, all these are my works. I enjoy the glory of the past, and, when I cast a look into futurity, I see with satisfaction that my ashes shall rest quietly on the same spot where my forefathers saw the breaking of storms."

What motives these for idolizing one's country! Yet there is no longer any patriotism, any public spirit in Holland: it is a whole, the parts of which have no other relation among themselves than the spot they occupy. Meanness, baseness, and dishonesty, characterize now the conquerors of Philip. They make a traffic of their oath, as of their provisions; and they will soon become the refuse of the universe, which they had astonished by their industry and by their virtues.

Ye unworthy members of the government, under which ye live, shudder at the dangers that surround you! Those who have slavish souls are not far removed from slavery. The sacred fire of liberty can only be kept up by chaste hands. Ye are not now in that state of anarchy, when the sovereigns of Europe, all equally opposed by the nobles in their respective states, could not carry on their designs, either with secrecy, unanimity, or rapidity; when the equilibrium of the several powers

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was merely the effect of their mutual debility. At present, power, grown more independent, confirms those advantages to a monarchy which a free state can never enjoy. What have republicans to oppose to a superiority so formidable? Their virtues; but you have lost them. The corruption of your manners, and of your magistrates, encourages every where the detractors of liberty; and, perhaps, your fatal example is the means of imposing a heavier yoke on other nations. What answer would you wish us to make to those men, who, either from the prejudice of education or the want of honesty, are perpetually telling us, This is the government which you extol so much in your writings; these are the happy consequences of that system of liberty you hold so dear. To those vices which you have laid to the charge of despotism, they have added another, which surpasses them all, the inability to stop the progress of evil. What answer can be given to so severe a satire on democracy?

Industrious Hollanders! ye who were formerly so renowned for your bravery, and are at present so distinguished by your wealth, tremble at the idea of being again reduced to crouch under the rod you have broken, and which still hangs over you. Would you learn how the spirit of commerce may be united and preserved with the spirit of liberty? View from your shores that island, and those people, whom nature presents to you as a model for your imitation. Keep your eyes constantly fixed upon England: if the alliance of that kingdom has been your support, its conduct will now serve you as an instructor, and its example as a guide.

END OF THE SECOND BOOK.

BOOK

B O O K III.

Settlements, Trade, and Conquests of the English in the East Indies.

*Sketch of the
ancient state of
the English com-
merce.*

NOTHING is known with certainty, either of the period in which the British isles were peopled, or of the origin of their first inhabitants. All we can learn from the most authentic historical records is, that they were successively visited by the Phœnicians, the Carthaginians, and the Gauls. The traders of these nations used to go there to barter earthen vessels, salt, all kinds of iron and copper instruments, for skins, slaves, hounds, bull-dogs, and more especially for tin. Their profits were just what they pleased in their dealings with savages, equally ignorant of the value of what they sold or bought.

From a loose speculation, we would be apt to imagine that islanders have been the first civilized people among mankind. There is nothing to confine people living on a continent: they may go to get their livelihood at a great distance and avoid fighting at the same time. In islands, war, and the inconveniencies of a too limited society, should sooner make laws and treaties necessary. But, whatever is the reason of it, we generally see the manners and the government of islanders formed later and more imperfectly than others. All the traditions respecting Britain, particularly, confirm this assertion.

The Roman empire was neither sufficiently lasting, nor peaceful enough to improve, in any considerable degree, the industry of the Britons. Even the small progress that agriculture and the arts had made during this period, was lost so soon as that haughty power had determined to abandon this conquest. The spirit of slavery which the inhabitants of the southern parts of Britain

Britain had contracted, deprived them of the courage necessary to resist at first the overflowings of their neighbours the Picts, who had saved themselves from the yoke, by flying towards the north of the island, and prevented them afterwards from being able to oppose the more destructive, more obstinate, and more numerous expeditions of plunderers that poured in swarms from the more northern countries of Europe.

All nations had reason to lament this dreadful plague, the most destructive, perhaps, that ever was recorded in the annals of the world; but the calamities which Great Britain particularly experienced are inexpressible. Every year, several times even in a year, her countries were ravaged, her houses burnt, her women ravished, her temples stripped, her inhabitants massacred, tortured or enslaved. All these misfortunes succeeded each other with inconceivable rapidity. When the country was so far destroyed, that nothing remained to satisfy the rapacity of these barbarians, they seized on the land itself. One nation succeeded another. One troop supervening, expelled or exterminated the one that was already established; and this succession of revolutions constantly kept up indolence, mistrust, and misery. In these dispiriting times, the Britons had but very little commercial intercourse with the continent. Exchanges were even so rare amongst them, that it was necessary to have witnesses for the sale of the least trifle.

A stop seemed to be given to the course of these misfortunes by the union of the two kingdoms into one, when William the Conqueror subdued Great Britain, a little after the middle of the eleventh century. His followers came from countries rather more civilized, more active, and more industrious, than those in which they were about to settle in. Such a communication ought naturally to have rectified and enlarged the ideas of the conquered people. Unhappily the introduction of the Feudal government occasioned so speedy and so complete a revolution in matters of property, that every thing was thrown into confusion*.

The

* We must attribute this confusion to the introduction of the Feudal government, which was at that time the sole foundation of the

The minds of men were scarcely settled, and the conquerors and the conquered had but just begun to consider themselves as one and the same people, when the abilities and strength of the nation were engaged in supporting the pretensions of their sovereigns to the crown of France. In these obstinate wars, the English displayed military talents and courage; but, after several great efforts, and considerable successes, they were forced back into their island, where domestic troubles exposed them to fresh calamities.

During these different periods, the whole commerce was in the hands of the Jews and the bankers of Lombardy, who were alternately favoured and robbed, considered as useful persons, and condemned to death, expelled and recalled: these tumults were increased by the audacity of the pirates, who being sometimes protected by the government, with which they shared their spoils, attacked all ships indiscriminately, and frequently sank their crews. The interest of money was at fifty per cent. Leather, furs, butter, lead, and tin, were the only things exported from England, at a very moderate rate, and thirty thousand sacks of wool, which returned annually a more considerable sum. As the English were then totally unacquainted with the art of dying wool, and manufacturing it with elegance, the greatest part of this money returned. To remedy this inconvenience, foreign manufacturers were invited, and the people were prohibited from wearing any clothes that were not of home manufacture. At the same time, the exportation of manufactured wool and wrought iron was forbidden; two laws altogether worthy of the age in which they were instituted.

Henry the Seventh permitted the barons to dispose of their lands, and the common people to buy them. This regulation diminished the inequality which formerly subsisted between the fortunes of the lords and their vassals; it made the latter more independent, and inspired

the stability, as well as the disorders, of the greater part of the monarchical governments in Europe. Under such vitious institutions, the State continued to languish. It was no less disturbed by civil commotions, than it had formerly been by the incursions of barbarians.

inspired the people with the desire of enriching themselves, and the expectation of enjoying their riches. There were many obstacles to this wish, some of which were removed. The company of merchants established at London was prevented from exacting in future the sum of one thousand five hundred and seventy-five livres * from each of the other merchants in the kingdom, desirous of trading at the great fairs of the low countries. In order to fix a greater number of people to the labours of husbandry, it was enacted, that no person should put his son or daughter out to any kind of apprenticeship, without being possessed of a rent of twenty-two livres ten sols † in landed property. This absurd law was afterwards mitigated.

Unfortunately that law which regulated the price of all sorts of provisions, of woollen, of workmens wages, of stuffs, and of cloathing, was maintained in its full force. Even other impediments were thrown in the way of commerce, on account of some pernicious combinations that were set on foot. The loan of money at interest, and the profits of exchange, were strictly prohibited, as usurious in themselves, or calculated to introduce usury. The exportation of money in any kind of form was forbidden; and, in order to prevent foreign merchants from carrying it clandestinely away, they were compelled to change into English merchandize the entire produce of the goods they had brought into England. The exportation of horses was likewise prohibited; and the people were not sufficiently enlightened to discover that such a prohibition would necessarily cause the propagation and improvement of the species to be neglected. At length corporations were established in all the towns; that is to say, the state authorized all persons of the same profession, to make such regulations as they should think necessary for their exclusive preservation and success. The nation is still oppressed with a regulation so contrary to general industry, and which reduces every thing to a kind of monopoly.

Upon considering such a number of strange laws, we might be induced to think that Henry was either in-

U 2

different

* 68 l. 18 s. 1½ d.

† Near 20 s.

different about the prosperity of his kingdom, or that he was totally deficient in understanding. Nevertheless, it is certain that this prince, in spite of his extreme avarice, often lent considerable sums of money without interest, to merchants who had not property sufficient to carry on the schemes they had planned : besides, the wisdom of his government is so well confirmed, that he is accounted, with reason, one of the greatest monarchs that ever filled the throne of England. But, notwithstanding all the efforts of genius, it requires a succession of several ages before any science can be reduced to simple principles. It is the same thing with theories as with machines, which are always very complicated at first, and which are only freed in the course of time, by observation and experience from those useless wheels which only served to increase their frictions.

The knowledge of the succeeding reigns was not much more extensive upon the matters we are treating of. Some Flemings, settled in England, were the only good workmen in these branches ; they were almost always insulted and oppressed by the English workmen, who were jealous without emulation ; they complained, that all the customers went to the Flemings, and they raised the price of corn. The government adopted these popular prejudices, and forbade all strangers to employ more than two workmen in their shops. The merchants were not better treated than the workmen ; and even those who were naturalized were obliged to pay the same duties as the aliens. Ignorance was so general, that the cultivation of the best lands was neglected, in order to convert them into pasture lands, even at the time that the number of sheep, which might be in one flock, was confined by the laws to two thousand. All mercantile correspondences were confined to the low countries. The inhabitants of these provinces bought the English merchandise, and circulated them through the different parts of Europe. It is probable that the nation would not have made any considerable figure for a long time, without a concurrence of favourable circumstances.

The Duke of Alva's cruelties drove several able manufacturers into England, who carried the art of the
fine

fine Flemish manufactures to London. The persecutions which the Protestants suffered in France supplied England with workmen of all kinds. Elizabeth, impatient of contradiction, but knowing and desirous of doing what was right, at once despotic and popular, with the advantages of a good understanding, and of being properly obeyed, availed herself of the fermentation of people's minds, as prevalent throughout all her dominions as thro' the rest of Europe; and, while this fermentation produced amongst other people nothing but theological disputes, and civil or foreign wars, in England it gave rise to a lively emulation for commerce, and for the improvement of navigation.

The English learned to build their ships at home, which they bought before of the merchants of Lubec and Hamburg. They were soon the only persons who traded to Muscovy, by the way of Archangel, which had been just discovered; and they presently came in competition with the Hans-towns in Germany, and in the north. They began to trade with Turkey. Several of their navigators attempted, tho' in vain, to discover a passage to India by the northern seas. At length Drake, Stephens, Cavendish, and some others, reached that place, some by the south sea, and others by doubling the Cape of Good Hope.

THE success of these voyages was sufficient to determine the most able merchants of London to establish a company in the year 1600; which obtained an exclusive privilege of trading to the East-Indies. The act which granted this privilege fixed it for fifteen years: It declared, that if it should prove injurious to the state, it should be annulled, and the Company suppressed, by giving two years previous notice to its members.

This clause of reserve was owing to the displeasure the Commons had lately shewn on account of a grant, the novelty of which might possibly offend them. The Queen had returned to the house, and had spoken on this occasion in a manner worthy to serve as a lesson to all sovereigns:

"GENTLEMEN," said she to the members of the house

U 3

commissioned

*First voyages
of the English
to India.*

commissioned to return her thanks, " I am extremely
 " sensible of your attachment, and of the care you have
 " taken to give me an authentic testimony of it. This
 " affection for my person had determined you to apprize
 " me of a fault I had inadvertently fallen into from ig-
 " norance, but in which my will had no share. If your
 " vigilance had not discovered to me the mischiefs which
 " my mistake might have produced, what pain should
 " I not have felt, who have nothing dearer to me than
 " the affection and preservation of my people? May my
 " hand suddenly wither, may my heart be struck at once
 " with a deadly blow, before I shall ever grant particu-
 " lar privileges that my subjects may have reason to com-
 " plain of. The splendor of the throne has not so far
 " dazzled my eyes, that I should prefer the abuse of an
 " unbounded authority to the use of a power exercised
 " by justice. The brilliancy of royalty blinds only those
 " princes who are ignorant of the duties that the crown
 " imposes. I dare believe that I shall not be ranked a-
 " mong such monarchs. I know that I hold not the
 " sceptre for my own proper advantage, and that I am
 " entirely devoted to society, which has put its confi-
 " dence in me. It is my happiness to see that the state
 " has hitherto prospered under my government; and
 " that my subjects are worthy, that I should yield up
 " my crown and my life for their sakes. Impute not
 " to me the improper measures I may be engaged in,
 " nor the irregularities which may be committed under
 " the sanction of my name. You know that the mini-
 " sters of princes are too often guided by private inter-
 " ests, that truth seldom reaches the ears of kings, and
 " that, obliged as they are, from the multiplicity of af-
 " fairs they are laden with, to fix their attention on those
 " which are of the greatest importance, it is impossible
 " they should see every thing with their own eyes."

The funds of this Company were, at first, far from
 being considerable. Part of them was expended in fit-
 ting out a fleet of four ships, which sailed in the begin-
 ning of the year 1601; and the rest was sent abroad in
 money and merchandise.

Lancaster, who commanded the expedition, arrived
 the year following at the port of Achen, which was at

that

that time a celebrated mart. Intelligence was received of the victories gained by the English over the Spaniards at sea ; and this intelligence procured him a very distinguished reception. The King behaved to him in the same manner as if he had been his equal ; he ordered that his own wives, richly habited, should play, in his presence, several airs for dancing on a variety of instruments. This favour was followed by all the compliances that could be wished for to facilitate the establishment of a safe and advantageous commerce. The English admiral was received at Bantam in the same manner as at the place where he first landed ; and a ship which he had dispatched to the Molucca islands brought him a considerable cargo of cloves and nutmegs. With these valuable spices, and the pepper he took in at Java and Sumatra, he returned safe to Europe.

This early success determined the Society, who had intrusted their interests in the hands of this able man, to form settlements in India ; but not without the consent of the natives. They did not wish to begin with conquests. Their expeditions were nothing more than the enterprizes of humane and fair traders. They made themselves beloved, but they gained nothing by this good impression, except a few factories, and were in no condition to sustain the attempts of their rivals, who were very formidable.

The Portuguese and Dutch were in possession of large provinces, well fortified places, and good harbours. By these advantages their trade was secured against the natives of the country, and against new competitors ; their return to Europe was rendered easy ; and they had opportunities of getting a good sale for the commodities they carried to Asia, and to purchase those they wanted at a reasonable price. The English, on the contrary, exposed to the caprice of seasons and of people, having no strength, or place of security, and deriving their supplies from England only, could not carry on an advantageous trade. They found it almost impossible to acquire great riches without flagrant acts of injustice, and that, if they would surpass, or even equal the nations they had censured, they must pursue the same conduct.

The plan of forming lasting settlements, and of attempting

tempting conquests, seemed too great to be accomplished by the forces of an infant society : but they flattered themselves that they should meet with protection, because they thought themselves useful. Their expectations were frustrated. They could obtain nothing from James I. ; a weak prince, infected with the false philosophy of his age, of a subtle and pedantic genius, and better qualified to be the head of an university, than to preside over an empire. By their activity, perseverance, and judicious choice of officers and factors, the Company provided those succours which were refused them by their Sovereign. They erected forts, and founded colonies in the islands of Java, Poleron, Amboyna, and Banda. They likewise shared the spice-trade with the Dutch, which will always be the most certain branch of eastern commerce, because the objects of it are become necessary articles of life. It was of still more importance at this period ; as the extravagance of fancy had not then made so much progress in Europe as it has done since ; and besides, there was not that prodigious demand for India linens, stuffs, teas, and Chinese varnish, that there is at present.

Disputes between the English and Dutch.

THE Dutch, who had driven the Portuguese from the spice-islands, never intended to suffer a nation to settle there, whose maritime force, character, and government, would make them formidable rivals. They had numberless advantages on their side ; such as, powerful colonies ; a well-exercised navy ; firm alliances ; a great fund of wealth ; a knowledge of the country, and of the principles and details of commerce, which the English wanting, were attacked in all possible ways.

The first step their rival took was to drive them from the fertile places where they had formed settlements. In the islands where their power was less established, they endeavoured, by accusations, equally void of truth and decency, to make them odious to the natives of the country. These shameful expedients not meeting with all the success the Dutch expected, those avaricious traders resolved to proceed to acts of violence. An extraordinary

extraordinary occasion brought on the commencement of hostilities sooner than was expected.

It is a custom at Java for the new married women to dispute with their husbands the first favours of love. This kind of contest, which the men take a pride in terminating immediately, and the women in protracting as long as possible, sometimes lasts several weeks. The King of Bantam having overcome the resistance of a new bride, made public entertainments in celebration of his triumph. The strangers in the harbour were invited to these festivals. Unhappily for them the English were treated with too much distinction. The Dutch looked with a jealous eye upon this preference, and did not defer revenge a moment. They attacked them on all sides.

The Indian ocean became, at this period, the scene of the most bloody engagements between the maritime forces of the two nations. They fought out, attacked, and combated each other with the spirit of men who chose to conquer or die. Equal courage appeared on both sides, but there was a disparity in their forces. The English were on the point of being overcome, when some moderate people in Europe, where the flames of war had not reached, endeavoured to find out the means of accommodating their differences. By an infatuation, which it is not easy to explain the cause of, the very strangest of all was adopted.

In 1619 the two Companies signed a treaty, the purport of which was, that the Molucca islands, Amboyna, and Banda, should belong in common to the two nations: that the English should have one third, and the Dutch two-thirds of the produce at a fixed price: that each, in proportion to their interest, should contribute to the defence of these islands: that a council, composed of skilful men of both parties, should regulate all the affairs of commerce at Batavia: That this agreement, guaranteed by the respective sovereigns, should last twenty years; and that, if any differences should arise, during this interval, that could not be settled by the two Companies, they should be determined by the the King of Great Britain and the States-General. Among all the political conventions preserved in history, it

it would be difficult to find a more extraordinary one than this. It had the fate it deserved.

The Dutch were no sooner informed of it in India, than they devised means to render it ineffectual. The situation of affairs favoured their designs. The Spaniards and the Portuguese had taken advantage of the disputes between their enemies, to regain their settlements in the Moluccas. They might fortify themselves there, and it was dangerous to give them time. The English commissaries concurred with them in opinion, that it would be best to attack them without delay; but added, that they were not at all prepared to act in concert with them. This declaration, which was expected, was registered; and their associates embarked alone in an expedition, all the advantages of which they reserved to themselves. The agents of the Dutch Company had only one step further to go, to get all the spices into the hands of their masters, which was, to drive their rivals from the island of Amboyna. The method by which they succeeded in their project was very extraordinary.

A Japanese, in the Dutch service at Amboyna, made himself suspected by his imprudent curiosity. He was seized, and confessed that he had entered into an engagement with the soldiers of his nation to deliver up the fort to the English. His comrades confirmed his account, making the same confession. Upon these unanimous depositions, the authors of the conspiracy, who did not disavow, but even acknowledged it, were put in irons; and the plot was stifled in the death of the criminals by the hands of justice. This is the account given by the Dutch.

The English have always considered this accusation as the suggestion of an unbounded avarice. They have maintained, that it was absurd to suppose, that ten factors and eleven foreign soldiers could have formed the project of seizing upon a place which was garrisoned by two hundred men: that even if these unhappy men had thought it possible to execute so extravagant a plan, would they not have been discouraged by the impossibility of obtaining succours to defend them against an enemy who would have besieged them on all sides? To make a conspiracy of this kind probable, it requires
stronger

stronger proof than a confession extorted from the accused by extremity of torture. The torments of the rack never afforded any other proof, than that of the courage or weakness of those whom barbarous custom condemned to it. These considerations, strengthened by several others almost equally convincing, have made the story of the conspiracy of Amboyna so suspected, that it has commonly passed for a cloak to palliate cruelty and avarice.

The ministry of James I. and the whole nation, were at that time so engaged in ecclesiastical subtilities, and the discussion of the rights of king and people, that they were not sensible of the insults offered to the English in the East. This indifference produced a caution which soon degenerated into weakness. These islanders, however, maintained the bravery of their character better at Coromandel and Malabar.

THEY had established factories at Mazulipatam, Calicut, and several other ports, and even at Delhi. Surat, the richest mart in these countries, tempted their ambition in 1611. The inhabitants

Disputes of the English with the Portuguese.

were disposed to receive them; but the Portuguese declared, that if they suffered this nation to make a settlement, they would burn all the towns upon the coast, and seize all the Indian vessels. The government was awed by these menaces. Middleton, disappointed in his hopes, was obliged to abandon the place, and return through a numerous fleet, to which he did more damage than he received.

Captain Thomas Best arrived in these latitudes the year following, with a very considerable force. He was received at Surat without any opposition. The agents he carried out with him had scarce entered upon their employments, when a formidable armament from Goa made its appearance. The English admiral, reduced to this alternative, either of betraying the interests he was intrusted with, or of exposing himself to the greatest danger in defending them, did not hesitate what part he should act. He twice attacked the Portuguese, and, notwithstanding the great inferiority of his squadron,

dron, gained the victory each time. However, the advantage the vanquished derived from their position, their ports, and their fortresses, always made the English navigation in the Guzarat very difficult. They were obliged to maintain a constant struggle against an obstinate enemy, that was not discouraged by defeats. No tranquillity was to be obtained, but at the price of new contests and new triumphs.

*The English
form connections
with Persia.*

THE news of these glorious successes against a nation which had hitherto been thought invincible, reached as far as the capital of Persia.

This vast country, so celebrated in antiquity, appeared to have been free at the first institution of its government. The monarchy rose upon the ruins of a depraved republic. The Persians were long happy under this form of government: their manners were as simple as their laws. At length the spirit of conquest infused itself into the sovereigns. At that time the treasures of Assyria, the spoils of many trading nations, and the tribute arising from a vast number of provinces, brought immense riches into the empire, which soon occasioned a total alteration. The disorders rose to such a pitch, that the attention of government seemed to be solely confined to the care of the public amusements.

A people totally devoted to pleasure could not fail in a short time to be reduced to a state of slavery. They were successively enslaved by the Macedonians, the Parthians, the Arabians, and the Tartars; and, towards the close of the fifteenth century, by the Sophis, who pretended to be the descendants of Aly, author of the famous reformation, by which Mohammedanism was divided into two branches.

No prince of this new race made himself so famous as Schah Abbas, surnamed the Great. He conquered Candahar, several places of importance upon the Black Sea, part of Arabia, and drove the Turks out of Georgia, Armenia, Mesopotamia, and all the countries they had conquered on this side the Euphrates.

These victories produced remarkable changes in the interior

interior administration of the empire. The great men took advantage of the civil broils to make themselves independent; they were degraded, and all posts of consequence were given to strangers, who had neither the power nor inclination to raise factions. The militia having taken upon themselves to dispose of the crown at their pleasure; they were restrained by foreign troops, whose religion and customs were different. Anarchy had inclined the people to sedition; and, to prevent this, the towns and villages were filled with colonies chosen out of nations whose manners and character bore no resemblance to those of the ancient inhabitants. These arrangements gave rise to a despotism the most absolute, perhaps, that any country ever experienced.

It is surprizing how the great Abbas found means to introduce into this government, which trampled on the natural rights of mankind, some designs for the public advantage. He patronized the arts, and established them at court, and in the provinces. All who came into his dominions, if they possessed talents of any kind, were sure of being well received, assisted, and rewarded. He would often say, That strangers were the best ornaments of an empire, and added more to a prince's dignity than the pomp of the most refined luxury.

While Persia was rising from its ruins by the different branches of industry that were every where established, a colony of Armenians, transplanted to Ispahan, carried the spirit of commerce into the heart of the empire. In a little time, these traders, and the natives of the country who followed their example, spread themselves over the East, into Holland, England, the Mediterranean, the Baltic, and wherever business was carried on with spirit and advantage. The Sophi himself bore a part in their enterprizes, and advanced them considerable sums, which they employed to advantage in the most celebrated marts in the world. They were obliged to return the capital on the terms agreed upon; and, if they had increased it by their industry, he granted them some recompense.

The Portuguese, who found that a part of the Indian trade with Asia and Europe was likely to be diverted to Persia, imposed restraints upon it: they would not

suffer the Persians to purchase merchandize any where but from their magazines : they fixed the price of it ; and, if they sometimes allowed it to be taken at the places where it was manufactured, it was always to be carried in their own bottoms, charging all expences of freight and exorbitant customs. This stretch of power displeased the great Abbas, who being informed of the resentment of the English, proposed to unite their maritime strength with his land-forces to besiege Ormus. This place was attacked by the combined arms of the two nations, and taken in the year 1622, after a contest that lasted two months. The conquerors divided the spoil, which was immense, and afterwards totally demolished the place.

Three or four leagues from hence there was, upon the continent, an harbour called Gombron, or Bender Abassi. Nature seemed not to have designed it should be inhabited. It is situated at the foot of a ridge of mountains of an excessive height ; the air you breathe seems to be on fire ; mortal vapours continually exhale from the bowels of the earth ; the fields are black and dry, as if they had been scorched with fire. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, as Bender Abassi had the advantage of being placed at the entrance of the gulf, the Persian monarch chose to make it the center of the extensive trade he intended to carry on with India. The English joined in this project. A perpetual exemption from all imposts, and a moiety of the product of the customs, were granted them, on condition they should maintain, at least, two men of war in the gulf. This precaution was thought necessary to frustrate the attempts of the Portuguese, whose resentment was still to be dreaded.

From this time Bender Abassi, which was before a poor fishing town, became a flourishing city. The English carried thither spices, pepper, and sugar, from the markets of the East ; and iron, lead, and cloths, from the ports of Europe *. The profits arising from these commodities were increased by the very high freights paid

* To their cargo they also added woollen cloth, which Persia formerly got from their Turkey Company.

paid them by the Armenians, who were still in possession of the richest branch of the Indian commerce.

These merchants had, for a long time, been concerned in the linen trade. They had never been supplanted, either by the Portuguese, who were intent only on plunder, or by the Dutch, whose attention was totally confined to the spice-trade. They might nevertheless be apprehensive, that they should not be able to withstand the competition of a people who were equally rich, industrious, active, and frugal. The Armenians acted then as they have ever done since: they went to India, where they bought cotton, which they sent to the spinners; the cloths were manufactured under their own inspection, and carried to Gombroon, from whence they were transported to Ispahan. From thence they found their way into the different provinces of the empire, the dominions of the Grand Signior, and into Europe, where the custom has prevailed of calling them Persian manufactures, tho' they were never made but on the coast of Coromandel. Such is the influence of names upon opinions, that the vulgar error, which attributes to Persia the manufactures of the Indies, will, in a series of ages, perhaps pass with the learned in future times for an incontestable truth. The insurmountable difficulties which errors of this kind have occasioned in the history of Pliny and other ancient writers, should induce us to set a high value on the labours of the Literati of this age, who collect the works of nature and of art, with a view of transmitting them to posterity.

In exchange for the merchandise they carried to Persia they gave the following articles, which were either the produce of their own soil, or the fruits of their industry:—Silk, which was the principal commodity, and was prepared and exported in great quantities.—Carmanian wool, which nearly resembles that of the Vicuña. It was of great use in the manufacture of hats, and of some stuffs. It is a remarkable circumstance in the goats that produce it, that, in the month of May, the fleece falls off of itself.—The turquoises *, which are more or less valuable, according as they are procured

X 2

from

* A sort of precious stone, of a blue colour.

T.

from one or other of the three mines that produce them; they were formerly an article of the dress of our ladies.

—Gold brocades, which sold at a higher price than any of those which are the produce of the most celebrated manufactures; some of them were made to be worn on one, and others on both sides: they were used for window-curtains, screens, and magnificent sophas*.

—Tapestry, which has since been so well imitated in Europe, and has, for a long time, been the richest furniture of our rooms.—Morocco, which, as other skins, is brought to a degree of perfection which cannot be equalled any where else†.—Shagreen‡, goats hair, rose water, medicinal roots, gums for colours, dates, horses, arms, and many other articles, of which some are sold in India, and others carried to Europe.

Though the Dutch had found means to ingross all the trade of India, they viewed the transactions of Persia with a jealous eye. They thought the privileges enjoyed by their rivals in the road of Bender Abassi might be compensated, by the advantage they had in having a greater quantity of spices, and entered into a competition with them||.

THE

* About the loom wherein these great pieces of stuff are manufactured, five or six men make twenty-five or thirty shittles more at one time.

† Morocco was always dressed with lime; and they made use of salt and gall nuts, in place of beech mast, the use of which is unknown to the Persians.

‡ Shagreen is made of the skin of an ass's hips. In place of mustard seed, elsewhere made use of to spot it, they used casbin seed.

|| Their trade was at first upon a very unprofitable plan. They were obliged to deposite their cargoes in the King's warehouses, and take from him the goods of the country in return. By degrees the value of their commodities was brought down so low, and those of the Prince raised to such a heighth, that they were considerable losers. This system of oppression was put an end to during the war with England. A treaty was at that time concluded with the court of Ispahan, which bore, that the Dutch Company were at liberty to bring into the empire, every year, goods to the value of a million, which might be sold where and to whom they pleased, free of all duties whatever; and, if they brought in more, they should pay the usual duties for the surplus. In return for this favour, they were obliged to purchase every year from government, 600 bales of raw silk, of 216 pounds weight each, at the rate of 550 florins per bale, which was double the price of silk throughout all

THE English, harassed in every mart by a powerful enemy, resolutely bent on their destruction, were obliged every where to give way. Their fate was hastened, by those civil and religious dissensions which deluged their country with blood, and extinguished all sentiment and knowledge. India was totally forgotten, while the most important interests were at stake; and the Company, oppressed and discouraged, were reduced to nothing at the time that the death of Charles afforded so instructive and dreadful a lesson.

*Decline of
the English in
India.*

Cromwell, enraged at the favours the Dutch had shewn to the unfortunate family of the Stuarts, and at the asylum they had afforded to the English, who had been proscribed; and piqued that the republic of the United Provinces should pretend to the dominion of the sea; proud of his success, and sensible of his own strength, and of that of the nation under his command, resolved at the same time to make it respected, and to revenge his own quarrel. He declared war against the Dutch.

Of all the maritime wars which have been recorded in history, none was conducted with more knowledge, or was more famous for the skill of the commanders, and the bravery of the sailors; none presented so great a number of obstinate and bloody engagements. The English obtained the advantage, and owed it to the size of their ships, in which particular they have since been imitated by other European nations.

The Protector, whose voice was law, did not exert himself as far as he might in favour of India. He contented himself with providing for the security of the English trade, procuring a disavowal of the massacre at Amboyna, and insisting upon an indemnification for the descendants of the unhappy victims who perished in that dreadful transaction. No notice is taken in the treaty of the forts taken from the nation by the Dutch, in the island of Java, and in several of the Moluccas. It was stipulated, indeed, that the

island
all Persia; but they indemnified themselves for the losses they made with government, by trading with private merchants.

island of Puleron should be restored; but the usurpers, seconded by the English negociator whom he had corrupted, found means to elude this article so dexterously, which might and ought to have produced a rivalry in the spice-trade, that the observance of it was never enforced.

*Revival of
the English
trade in In-
dia.*

NOTWITHSTANDING this neglect, as soon as the Company had obtained from the Protector a renewal of their privileges in 1657, and found themselves firmly supported by the public authority, they showed a spirit and a resolution which they had lost during their misfortunes. Their courage kept pace with their rights.

The success they met with in Europe accompanied them into Asia. Arabia, Persia, Indostan, the eastern parts of India, China, and all the markets where the English had formerly traded, were opened to them. They were even received with more frankness, and less distrust, than they had experienced formerly. Their trade was very brisk, and their profits considerable: nothing was wanting to compleat their success but an entrance into Japan, which they attempted. But the Japanese having learned from the Dutch that the King of England had married a daughter of the King of Portugal, refused to admit the English into their ports*.

This disappointment notwithstanding, the Company's affairs were in a very flourishing condition: they flattered themselves with the pleasing hopes of giving a greater extent and security to their affairs, when they found their career retarded by a rivalry which their own success created.

*Misfortunes
and misconduct
of the English
in the Indies.*

SOME traders, fired with the relation of the advantages to be obtained in India, resolved to make voyages thither. Charles II. who filled the

* The officer who had been charged with this delicate business demanded, if, after the death of this Princess, the vessels of his nation would be admitted into the empire: *don't imagine* (said they) *that the orders of the Emperor are like sweat, that never again returns into the body from whence it issued.*

the throne with the voluptuous and dissolute manners of a private character, gave them permission for a valuable consideration; while, on the other hand, he extorted large sums from the Company, to enable him to persecute those who encroached upon his privilege. A competition of this nature would unavoidably degenerate into piracy. The English, thus becoming enemies to each other, carried on their disputes with a rancour and animosity which lowered them in the opinion of the people of Asia.

The Dutch wished to take advantage of so singular a conjuncture. These republicans had, for a long time, been absolute masters of the Indian trade. They had seen with regret a part of it taken out of their hands, at the conclusion of the civil wars in England. They hoped to recover it by the superiority of their forces, when, in 1664, the two nations entered into a war in all parts of the world; but the hostilities did not continue long enough to answer these sanguine expectations. As the peace prevented them from having recourse to open violence, they resolved to attack the sovereigns of the country to oblige them to shut their ports against their rival. The foolish and despicable behaviour of the English increased the insolence of the Dutch, who proceeded so far as to drive them ignominiously from Bantam in 1680.

So serious and public an insult roused the spirit of the English Company. The desire of re-establishing their character, gratifying their revenge, and maintaining their interests, animated them to make the greatest efforts. They equipped a fleet of twenty-three ships, with eight thousand regular troops on board. They were ready to sail, when their departure was postponed by the King's orders. Charles, whose necessities and licentiousness were unbounded, had entertained hopes of receiving an immense sum to induce him to recal this armament. As he could not obtain it from his subjects, he was resolved to receive it from his enemies. He sacrificed the honour and trade of his nation for 2,250,000 livres*, which were paid him by the Dutch, who were

intimidated

intimidated by these great preparations. The intended expedition never took place.

The Company, exhausted by the expences of an armament which had been rendered useless by the venality of the court, sent their vessels to India without the necessary funds to supply the cargoes; but with orders to the factors, if possible, to take them upon credit. The fidelity they had hitherto observed in their engagements procured them 6,750,000 livres *. Nothing can be more extraordinary than the method that was taken to pay them back.

Josias Child, who, from being a director, was become the tyrant of the Company, is said, unknown to his colleagues, to have sent orders to India, to invent some pretence or other to defraud the lenders of their money. The execution of this iniquitous project was intrusted to his brother John Child, who was governor of Bombay. This avaritious, turbulent, and savage man, immediately proceeded to make several claims upon the governor of Surat, some more foolish than others. These demands meeting with the reception they deserved, he attacked all the vessels belonging to the subjects of the crown of Delhi, and singled out in particular the ships from Surat, as being the richest. He paid no regard even to vessels that sailed with his own pass-ports, and carried his insolence so far as to seize a fleet laden with provision for the great Mogul's army. This terrible pillage, which lasted the whole year 1688, occasioned incredible losses throughout all Indostan.

Aurengzebe, who held the reins of the empire with a steady hand, did not lose a moment in revenging so great an outrage. In the beginning of the year 1689 one of his lieutenants landed with twenty thousand men at Bombay; an island of consequence on the coast of Malabar, which a princess of Portugal had brought as her dowry to Charles II. and which that monarch had ceded to the Company in 1668. On the enemy's approach, the fort of Magazan was abandoned with such precipitation, that money, provisions, several chests of arms, and fourteen pieces of heavy cannon were left behind.

behind. The Indian general, encouraged by this first advantage, attacked the English in the field, routed them, and obliged them to retire into the principal fortress, which he invested, and hoped soon to make it surrender.

Child, who was as dastardly in time of danger as he had been daring in his piracies, immediately dispatched deputies to court to sue for pardon. After many intreaties, and much mean submission, the English were admitted into the Emperor's presence, with their hands tied, and their faces towards the ground. Aurengzebe, who was desirous of preserving a connection which he thought would be useful to his subjects, was not inflexible. Having delivered himself in the stile of an incensed sovereign, who could, and ought, perhaps, to revenge himself, he yielded to their intreaties and submission. The banishment of the author of the troubles, and an adequate compensation for such of his subjects as had been plundered, was all the justice exacted on this occasion, by the supreme will of the most despotic monarch that ever existed. On these moderate terms, the English were permitted still to enjoy the privileges they had obtained at different times in the roads belonging to the Mogul.

Thus ended this unhappy affair, which for several years interrupted the trade of the Company, occasioned an expence of between nine and ten millions *, the loss of five large vessels, and a greater number of small ones; and cost the lives of many thousand excellent sailors, and ended in the ruin of the credit and honour of the nation: two particulars, the value of which can never be estimated too highly.

By changing their maxims and their conduct, the Company might flatter themselves with the prospect of being extricated from the abyss into which their own behaviour had plunged them. These amusing hopes, however, were soon blasted by a revolution which did not immediately concern them. James II. a tyrannical and fanatic prince, but one who understood maritime affairs and commerce better than any of his cotemporaries, was deposed. This event made all Europe take

arms.

* On an average, about 416,000 l.

arms. The consequences of these bloody quarrels are well known. Perhaps, it is not so well known that the French privateers took four thousand two hundred English merchantmen, valued at six hundred seventy-five millions of livres *, and that the greatest part of the vessels returning from India were included in this fatal list.

These depredations were succeeded by a spirit of economy, which must naturally hasten the ruin of the Company. The French refugees had carried the culture of flax and hemp into Ireland and Scotland. For the encouragement of this branch of industry, it was thought proper to prohibit the wearing of Indian linens, except muslins, and those which were necessary for the African trade. How could a body already exhausted sustain so unforeseen, so heavy a stroke?

The peace, which should have put an end to these misfortunes, filled up the measure of them. The three kingdoms with one voice exclaimed against the Company. It was not their decline that raised them enemies; it only encouraged those they had already. They met with opposition at their first establishment. Ever since the year 1615, several politicians had declaimed against the trade to the East-Indies. They asserted, that it weakened the naval strength, by destroying great numbers of men; and lessened the Levant and Russian commerce, without affording an equivalent advantage. These clamours, though contradicted by judicious men, grew so violent towards the year 1628, that the Company seeing themselves exposed to the odium of the nation, applied to government. They petitioned that the nature of their commerce might be examined: that it might be prohibited, if it was contrary to the interest of the state; and, if favourable to them, that it might be authorized by a public declaration. The opposition of the nation, which had been some time dormant, was renewed with more fury than ever, at the period we are speaking of. Those who were less severe in their speculations, consented to a trade with India; but maintained that it should be laid

open

open to the whole nation. An exclusive charter was, in their opinion, a manifest encroachment upon liberty. According to them, government was established by the people with a view of advancing the general good: and it would be a crime against it to sacrifice public to private interests, by tolerating odious monopolies. They supported this useful and incontestable principle, by appealing to a recent instance. They urged, that, during the rebellion, the private merchants who had got possession of the Asiatic seas carried double the quantity of national goods there was formerly a demand for, and were in a condition to sell commodities on their return at so low a price as to supplant the Dutch in all the European markets. But these sagacious republicans, who were certain of their ruin if the English should continue any longer to conduct their affairs on the maxims of universal liberty, bribed certain persons to prevail with Cromwell to form a separate Company. These secret practices were countenanced by the English merchants concerned in that trade, who hoped for greater advantages in future; when, being the only venders, they might impose what terms they pleased upon the consumers. The Protector, deceived by the artful insinuations of both parties, renewed the charter, but for seven years only, that he might alter his conduct, if he found reason to think he had taken a wrong step.

This step was not thought wrong by any body. Several people were of opinion, that the trade to India could not be carried on with advantage, without an exclusive privilege: but many of them maintained that the present charter was insufficient, having been granted by kings who had no right to do it. They recited many acts of this kind which were abrogated by parliament in the reigns of Edward III. Henry IV. James I. and other princes. Charles II. indeed, obtained a verdict of this nature in the court of Common Pleas, but it was founded upon a frivolous pretence. This tribunal had the confidence to declare, *That the prince had authority to prevent his subjects from holding commerce with infidels, lest the purity of their faith should be contaminated.*

Though

Though the parties above mentioned were actuated by private, and even opposite views, they all united in the plan of making the trade free, or at least of procuring the reversal of the Company's charter. The nation, in general, were on their side: but the body that was attacked, defended itself by its partizans, the ministry, and all the dependents of the court, who made this a common cause. Each party had recourse to libels, intrigue, and corruption. These contending passions produced one of those storms, the violence of which can hardly be felt any where but in England. The several factions, sects, and interests, maintained a furious combat; in which they all mingled without distinction of rank, age, or sex. Such a spirit of enthusiasm had never been raised by the greatest events. To keep up the zeal of their friends, the Company offered to lend large sums on condition of obtaining their charter. Their adversaries made offers still more considerable to get it revoked.

The two houses of parliament, before whom this great cause was heard, declared in favour of the private merchants. They obtained leave to carry on trade to India, either separately or in concert. They entered into an association, and formed a new Company. The old one had permission to continue its armaments till the expiration of their charter, which was very near at hand. Thus England had two East India Companies at the same time, authorised by parliament, instead of one established by royal authority.

These two bodies shewed as much zeal for the destruction of each other as they had shown for their respective establishments: they had both experienced the advantages of trade, and viewed each other with all the jealousy and hatred which ambition and avarice never fail to inspire. Their dissensions soon broke out with considerable violence in Europe, as well as in India. At last, the two societies made advances towards a reconciliation, and united their funds in 1702. From this period, the affairs of the Company were carried on with greater propriety, prudence, and dignity: the principles of commerce, which were every day better understood in England, had a good effect on their administration,

ministration, as far as the interests of their monopoly could allow: they made improvements in their former regulations, and formed new ones: they endeavoured to indemnify themselves for the profits they were deprived of by a strong competition, by procuring a larger sale for their commodities. Their privileges were less violently attacked, since they had received the sanction of the laws, and obtained the protection of parliament.

Their prosperity was interrupted by some transient misfortunes. In 1702 the English had formed a settlement in the island of Pulocondor, which was dependent on Cochin-China. Their design was to take a share in the commerce of this rich kingdom, which had till then been too much neglected. An instance of excessive severity had given disgust to sixteen soldiers of Macassar, who were part of the garrison. On the 3d of March 1705 they set fire in the night to the houses belonging to the fort, and massacred the Europeans as they came to extinguish it. Thirty out of forty-five lost their lives in this manner; the rest were knocked on the head by the natives, who were exasperated at the insolence of these strangers. By this accident the Company lost the money their enterprize had cost them, together with the stock of their factory, and the prospects they had entertained.

The misfortunes they met with at Sumatra in the year 1719 were not attended with the same fatal consequences. This large island had been frequented by the English ever since their arrival in India, but they did not settle there till the year 1688. They drove the Dutch from Bencoolen; a considerable town on the western coast, built near a large and commodious bay, and took possession of it in their room. The conquerors found the islanders inclined to treat with them; and these dispositions were at first improved with prudence. This circumspect behaviour did not last long. The Company's agents soon abandoned themselves to that spirit of rapine and tyranny which the Europeans usually carry with them into Asia: Clouds of discontent between them and the natives of the country began to gather by degrees. Distrust and animosity had risen to the highest pitch, when the foundations of a

rising fort were discovered at the distance of a few miles from the coast. On seeing this, the inhabitants of Bencoolen took up arms, and were joined by the whole country. All the buildings belonging to the Company were instantly reduced to ashes; the English were routed, and obliged to embark with all the effects they could carry off. Their exile was not of long continuance. The fear of falling under the dominion of the merciless Dutch, who had a strong force upon their frontier, procured their recal. In recompence for this disaster, they obtained the advantage of finishing Fort-Marlborough without opposition, which they still retain.

These disturbances were no sooner appeased, than new ones arose in Malabar and other countries. As the source of them all lay in the avarice and turbulent disposition of the Company's servants, they put an end to them, by giving up the unjustifiable pretensions that had occasioned them. Other objects, of the most interesting nature, soon claimed their attention.

*War between
the English and
French.*

ENGLAND and France entered into a war in 1744. The whole world became the scene of their operations. In India, as well as in other places, each nation sustained its character. The English, ever animated with the spirit of commerce, attacked and ruined that of their enemies. The French, adhering to their passion for conquest, seized upon the principal settlements belonging to their rival. The event shewed which of the two nations had acted with the greatest prudence. The French nation, wholly intent on its own aggrandizement, sunk into a total inactivity; while England, deprived of the center of its power, carried its enterprizes to a greater extent.

A cessation of hostilities between the two divided nations had no sooner taken place, than they engaged themselves as auxiliaries in the quarrels of Indian princes. Soon after, they again took arms on their own account. Before the end of this war the French were driven out of the continent and seas of Asia. At the conclusion of the peace, in 1763, the English Company found themselves in possession of the empire, in Arabia,

Arabia, in the Persian gulph, on the coasts of Malabar and Coromandel, and at Bengal.

In all these countries there is a difference in climate, manners, soil, productions, the spirit of industry, and the price of merchandise. These particulars ought to be exactly and thoroughly understood. We will give a short sketch of them. This description will be found to have a particular connection with the history of a nation, which has obtained a remarkable influence, and derives from it the greatest advantages.

ARABIA is one of the largest peninsulas in the known world. It is bounded by Syria, Diarbeck, and Irac-Arabi on the north, by the Indian ocean on the south, by the gulph of Persia on the east, and on the west by the Red Sea, which separates it from Africa. It is commonly divided into three parts; Arabia Petræa, Arabia Deserta, and Arabia Felix; which names denote the nature of the soil in each of these countries.

General trade of the Red Sea, and of the English trade there in particular.

Arabia Petræa is the most western and the smallest of the three. It is for the most part uncultivated, and almost totally covered with rocks. In Arabia Deserta nothing is to be seen but scorched plains, heaps of sand raised and dissipated by the wind, and steep mountains never adorned with verdure. Springs are so rarely found there, that the possession of them is always disputed sword in hand. Arabia Felix owes its specious appellation less to its fertility than to its vicinity to the barren countries that surround it. These different regions, tho' exposed to great heats, enjoy a sky constantly pure and serene.

All histories agree that this country was peopled at a very early period. It is thought that its first inhabitants came from Syria and Chaldea. We cannot find at what period their form of government began; whether their knowledge was derived from India, or whether it was gradually acquired by themselves. It appears that their religion was Sabeism*, even before they were acquainted

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* The Sabeans were a sect of Idolaters much more ancient than the Jewish law.— In the early ages, Idolatry was divided betwixt two sects;

acquainted with the people of Upper Asia. They early had sublime ideas of the Divinity : they worshipped the stars as bodies animated by celestial spirits : their religion was neither cruel nor absurd ; and tho' they were liable to those fallies of enthusiasm so common among the southern nations, they do not seem to have been tainted with fanaticism till the time of Mohammed. The inhabitants of Arabia Deserta professed a worship not quite so rational. Many of them worshipped, and some offered human sacrifices, to the sun. That religions in barren countries, subject to inundations and volcanos, have always been tinged with cruelty, whilst in countries where nature has been more indulgent they have worn a gentler aspect, is a truth sufficiently evident, from the study of history, as well as from inspection of the globe. Every religion partakes of the climate where it is formed.

When Mohammed had established a new religion in his country, it was no difficult task to infuse a spirit of zeal into his followers ; and this zeal made them conquerors. They extended their dominion from the western seas to those of China, and from the Canaries to the Molucca islands. They carried useful arts along with them, which they improved to perfection. The Arabians did not equally succeed in the fine arts ; they shewed, indeed, some genius for them, but had not the least idea of that taste with which nature some time after inspired the people who became their disciples.

Perhaps genius, which is the offspring of a creative imagination, flourishes in hot countries, where a variety of productions, grand scenes, and surprising events, ex-

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sects ; the worshippers of *images*, called *Sabeans* ; and the worshippers of *fire*, called *Magi*. The Sabeans began with worshipping the heavenly bodies, which they supposed were animated with inferior deities. This religion first began among the Chaldeans with their knowledge in astronomy ; and from this religion it was that Abraham separated himself when he came out of Chaldea. From the Chaldeans it spread over all the east, from thence to Greece, and afterwards throughout the known world. The remains of this sect still subsist in Arabia, and near the Persian gulph, and pretend to derive their name from *Sabius*, a son of Seth ; and, among the books in which the doctrines of this sect are contained, they have one called *the Book of Seth*, which they pretend was written by that Patriarch. T.

cite enthusiasm; while taste, which selects with choice the produce of the fields that genius has sown, seems rather to belong to people of a steady, mild, and moderate temper, who live under the influence of an indulgent sky. Perhaps too this same taste, which is the effect of reason refined and matured by time, requires a certain stability in the government, united with a certain freedom of thinking, an insensible progress of science, which affording a greater scope to genius, enables it to discern more exactly the relation one object has to another, and to combine with happier art those mixed sensations which give the highest entertainment to men of elegant minds. Accordingly the Arabians, who were almost constantly forced into regions glowing with war and fanaticism, never enjoyed that temperature of government and climate which gives birth to taste. But they introduced into the countries they conquered, sciences which they had pillaged, as it were, in the course of their ravages, and all the arts essential to the prosperity of nations.

No nation, at that time, understood commerce so well, or carried it to a greater extent. They attended to it even in the course of their conquests. Their merchants, manufactures, and markets, reached from Spain to Tonquin; and other people, at least those in the western parts of the world, were indebted to them for arts and sciences, and all articles conducive to the convenience, the preservation, and the pleasures of life.

When the power of the Caliphs began to decline, the Arabians, after the example of several nations they had subdued, threw off the yoke of these princes, and the country re-assumed by degrees its ancient form of government, as well as its primitive manners. At this era, the nation being, as formerly, divided into tribes under the conduct of different chiefs, returned to their original character, from which fanaticism and ambition had made them depart.

The stature of the Arabians is low; their bodies lean, and their voice slender; but they have robust constitutions, brown hair, a swarthy complexion, black sparkling eyes, an ingenious countenance, but seldom agreeable. This contrasted mixture of features and qualities, though they appear to be incompatible, seem to have

been united in this race of men, to constitute a singular nation, whose figure and character partake strongly of that of the Turks, Africans, and Persians, by whom they are surrounded. Grave and serious, they add dignity to their long beard, speak little, use no gesture, make no pauses or hesitation in their conversation. They pique themselves on observing the strictest probity towards each other, which is the effect of that self-love, and that spirit of patriotism, which, united together, make any nation, clan, or society, esteem, favour, and prefer themselves to the rest of the world. The more carefully they preserve their phlegmatic character, so much the more formidable is their resentment when once it is raised. These people have abilities, and even a genius for the sciences; but they cultivate them little, either from want of assistance, or because they have no occasion for them; chusing rather, no doubt, to suffer natural evils than the inconvenience of labour. The Arabians, of the present age, afford no monument of genius, no productions of industry, which entitle them to make a figure in the history of mankind.

Their ruling passion is jealousy; that torment of impetuous, weak, and indolent minds. It might naturally be asked, whether this distrust was owing to the high or low opinion they entertained of themselves? It is said to be from the Arabians that several nations of Asia, Africa, and even Europe itself, have borrowed those despicable precautions which this odious passion prescribes against a sex, which ought to be the guardian, not the slave of our pleasures. As soon as a daughter is born, they unite, by a kind of future, those parts which nature has separated, leaving just space enough for the natural discharges. As the child grows, the parts by degrees adhere so closely, that, when the girls become marriageable, they are obliged to be separated by an incision. Sometimes it is thought sufficient to make use of a ring. The married women, as well as the unmarried, are subjected to this outrage on the virtue of the sex; with this difference only, that the ring worn by the young women cannot be taken off, whereas that of the married women has a kind of padlock, of which the husband keeps the key. This custom, which is known

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in all parts of Arabia, is almost universally adopted in the part that bears the name of *Petræa*.

Such are the manners of the nation in general. The different manner of living in the people who compose it must necessarily have introduced some peculiarities of character that are worthy of observation.

The number of Arabians who inhabit the desert may amount to two millions. They are distributed into a great many clans, some of which are more populous and considerable than others, but all independent of each other. Their government is simple: an hereditary chief, assisted by a few old men, determines all debates, and punishes offenders. If he is hospitable, humane, and just, they adore him; if haughty, cruel, and avaricious, they tear him in pieces, and appoint a successor out of his own family.

These people form encampments in all seasons of the year. They have no settled abode, and fix at different places, where they can be supplied with water, fruits, and pasture. They find an infinite charm in this wandering life, and consider the sedentary Arabs in the light of slaves. They live upon the milk and flesh of their herds. Their habits, tents, cordage, and the tapestry they sleep upon, are all made of the wool of their sheep, and the hair of their goats and camels. This is the employment of the women in each family; and there is not a single artist in the whole desert. What they consume in tobacco, coffee, rice, and dates, is purchased with the butter they carry to the frontiers, and by the money arising from the annual sale of twenty thousand camels, at forty-eight livres * a-head. These animals, so useful in the east, were formerly carried to Syria. The greatest number are now sent to Persia; the perpetual wars there having occasioned an extraordinary demand for them, and lessened their numbers.

These articles not being sufficient to supply the wants of the Arabs, they have contrived to raise a contribution on the caravans, which superstition obliges to traverse their sands. The most numerous of these, which goes from Damar to Mecca, procures a safe passage by the

the payment of a hundred purses, or a hundred and fifty thousand livres *, to which the Grand Signior is subjected, and which, by ancient agreement, is distributed among all the clans. The other caravans make similar terms with the clans thro' whose territories they are obliged to pass.

Independent of this expedient, the Arabs inhabiting the most northern part of the desert have had recourse to plunder. These people, so humane, faithful, and disinterested towards each other, are savage and rapacious in their transactions with foreigners. While they preserve in their tents the character of beneficent and generous hosts, they commit continual depredations on the towns and villages in their neighbourhood. They are good fathers, good husbands, and good masters; but all are enemies who do not belong to their tribe. They frequently carry their incursions to a great distance; and Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia, are not uncommonly the scenes of their depredations.

The Arabs, who devote themselves to plunder, form a sort of society with the camels, to carry on trade or war; where the man is to have all the profit, and the animal the principal fatigue. As these two beings are to live together, they are brought up with a view to each other. The Arab trains his camel, from its birth, to all the exercises and hardships it is to undergo during the whole course of its life. He accustoms it to travel far, and eat little. The animal is early inured to pass its days without drinking, and its nights without sleep. He teaches him to draw up his legs under his belly, while he suffers himself to be laden with burthens, that are insensibly increased as his strength increases by age and labour. In this singular plan of education, which princes sometimes more easily adopt to tame their subjects, in proportion as the labour is doubled, the subsistence is diminished. The Arabians qualify the camels for expedition, by matches, in which the horse enters into a competition with him. The latter, less active and nimble, tires out his rival in a long course. When the master and the camel are ready and equip-

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* 6,562 l. 10s.

ped for plunder, they set out together, traverse the sandy deserts, and lye in ambush upon the confines to rob the merchant or traveller. The man ravages, massacres, and seizes the prey; and the camel carries the booty. If these adventurers are pursued, they make a precipitate retreat. The master robber mounts his favourite camel, drives the whole troop before him, travels three hundred leagues in eight days, without unloading his camels, or allowing them more than an hour each day for rest, or a cake of dough for their subsistence. They sometimes remain the whole time without drinking, unless they happen to see a spring at a little distance from the road, when they redouble their pace, run to the water with eagerness, which makes them take at one draught as much as is sufficient to quench their present thirst, and serve them to the end of their journey. Such is the animal so often celebrated in the Bible, the Coran, and the eastern romances.

The Arabs, who live in districts that afford some slender pasture, and where the soil is proper for barley, breed the finest horses in the world. These horses are sent into all parts to improve and multiply the breed; but they are every where inferior in swiftness, beauty, and sagacity to those of Arabia. The masters live with them on the footing of domestics, on whose service and affection they can rely; and it happens with them as with all other dispersed people, those in particular who treat animals with kindness, that both the men and the animals partake, in some measure, of each other's manners and disposition. These Arabs are simple, mild, and docile; and the different religions that have prevailed in these countries, and the several governments of which they have been the subjects or tributaries, have produced very little alteration in the character they derive from climate or from habit.

The Arabs settled near the Indian and the Red Sea, and those who inhabit Arabia Felix were formerly a mild people, fond of liberty, and content with a state of independence, without dreaming of conquest. They were too much prejudiced in favour of the beauty of their sky, and of the soil that supplied their wants almost without culture, to be tempted to extend their
 dominion

dominion over different countries lying in another climate. Mohammed changed their ideas; but they retain no traces of the impulse he gave them. They pass their lives in smoking, taking coffee, opium, and sherbet. These gratifications are preceded or followed by exquisite perfumes that are burnt before them, the smoke of which they receive in their clothes, which are slightly sprinkled with rose-water.

Before the Portuguese had interrupted the navigation of the Red Sea, the Arabs had more activity. They were the factors of all the trade that passed thro' that channel. Aden, which is situated at the most southern extremity of Arabia upon the Indian ocean, was the mart in these parts. The situation of its harbour, which opened an easy communication with Egypt, Ethiopia, India, and Persia, had rendered it, for many ages, one of the most flourishing factories in Asia. Fifteen years after it had repulsed the great Albuquerque, who attempted to demolish it in 1513, it submitted to the Turks, who did not long remain masters of it. The king of Yemen, who possessed the only district in Arabia that merits the title of Happy, drove them from thence, and removed the trade to Mocha, a port in his dominions which till then was only a village.

This trade was at first inconsiderable, consisting principally in myrrh, incense, aloes, balm of Mecca, some aromatics and medicinal drugs. These articles, the exportation of which is continually retarded by exorbitant duties, and does not exceed at present 700,000 livres*, were at that time more in repute than they have been since; but must have been always of little consequence. Soon after a great change ensued from the introduction of coffee.

The coffee-tree is originally a native of the higher Ethiopia, where it has been known time immemorial, and is still cultivated with success. M. Lagrenée de Mezieres, one of the most intelligent agents that France ever had in the India service, had some of the fruit in his possession, and has made frequent trials of it. He found it to be larger, rather longer, not so green, and

almost

almost as fragrant as that which was begun to be gathered in Arabia towards the close of the fifteenth century.

It is commonly believed that a Mollach, named Chadel, was the first among the Arabs who made use of coffee, to relieve himself from a continual drowsiness which hindered him from attending punctually to his nightly devotions. His Dervises did the same; and their example was followed by the gentlemen of the law. It was soon found out, that this liquor purified the blood by a gentle agitation, dissipated the crudities of the stomach, and raised the spirits; and it was adopted even by those who had no occasion to keep themselves awake. It passed from the borders of the Red Sea to Medina, Mecca, and was introduced by the pilgrims into all the Mohammedan countries.

In those countries where there is less freedom of manners than in ours, where the jealousy of the men, and the close confinement of the women, make society less lively, it was thought proper to encourage public coffee-houses. Those in Persia soon became infamous, where young Georgian women, dressed like courtezans, acted obscene plays, and prostituted themselves for hire. When these offensive irregularities were suppressed by order of the court, these houses became places of genteel resort for the indolent, and of relaxation for the busy part of the world. The politicians entertained themselves with news, the poets recited their verses, and the Mollachs delivered their sermons, which were usually rewarded with some charitable donations.

Affairs were not in the same peaceable state at Constantinople. The coffee-houses were no sooner opened than they were frequented to excess. People spent their whole time in them. The grand Musti, exasperated at seeing the Mosques abandoned, pronounced that this infusion was included in that law of Mohammed which forbids the use of strong liquors. The government, which frequently aids the superstition of which it is sometimes the dupe, gave immediate orders that the houses which had given such offence to the priests should be shut up; and enjoined the officers of the police to put a stop to the use of this liquor in private

vate families. An inclination so strong still prevailed, in spite of all these severe regulations, that coffee continued to be drunk, and the places where it was to be had soon grew more numerous than ever.

In the middle of the last age, Kuprolî, the Grand Vizir, went in disguise to the principal coffee-houses in Constantinople. He there found a number of malcontents, who, thinking the affairs of government were in reality the concern of every private person, spoke of them with warmth, and arraigned with great boldness the conduct of the generals and ministers. He then visited the taverns, where wine was sold. They were full of plain people, chiefly soldiers, who, accustomed to consider the interests of the state as those of the prince, for whom they entertained a silent veneration, sung lively songs, talked of their amours, and warlike exploits. These last societies, which were attended with no inconveniences, he thought ought to be tolerated; but the first he considered as dangerous in an arbitrary state. He therefore suppressed them, and no attempts have since been made to revive them. This regulation, which was confined to the capital of the empire, has not discouraged the use of coffee, and has perhaps increased the consumption of it. It is publicly offered to sale in all the streets and markets ready made, and is drunk in every family at least twice a-day. In some it is always ready; it being the custom to offer it to all visitors, and reckoned equally unpolite not to offer it, or to refuse it.

At the very time that the coffee-houses in Constantinople were shut they were opened in London. This novelty was introduced there in 1652 by a merchant of the name of Edward, who returned from the Levant. The English were fond of it; and it has since been introduced among all the nations of Europe, but is drunk with more moderation than in those climates where religion prohibits the use of wine.

The tree that produces the coffee grows in the territory of Betelsagui, a town belonging to Yemen, situated upon a dry sand, at the distance of ten leagues from the Red Sea. It is cultivated in a district fifty leagues long, and fifteen or twenty broad: the fruit

is not every where in equal perfection. That which grows upon high ground is smaller, greener, weighs heavier, and is generally preferred to the others.

It is computed that Arabia contains twelve millions of inhabitants, among whom, in general, coffee constitutes a favourite article in their entertainments. None but the rich citizens have the pleasure of tasting it in its genuine form. The generality are obliged to content themselves with the shell and the husk of this valuable berry. These appendages, so much despised, make a liquor of a pretty clear colour, which has the taste of coffee without its bitterness and strength. These articles may be had at a low price at Betelsagui, which is the general market for them. Here likewise is sold all the coffee which comes out of the country by land. The rest is carried to Mocha, which is thirty-five leagues distant, or to the nearer ports of Lohia or Hodeida, from whence it is transported in small vessels to Jodda. The Egyptians fetch it from the last mentioned place, and all other nations from the former.

The quantity of coffee exported may be estimated at twelve millions five hundred and fifty thousand weight. The European companies take off a million and a half; the Persians three millions and a half; the fleet from Suez six millions and a half; Indostan, the Maldives, and the Arabian colonies on the coast of Africa, fifty thousand; and the Caravans a million.

As the coffee which is bought up by the Caravans and the Europeans is the best that can be procured, it costs from sixteen to seventeen sols * a pound. The Persians, who content themselves with that of an inferior quality, pay no more than twelve or thirteen sols † a pound. The Egyptians purchase it at the rate of fifteen or sixteen ‡; their cargoes being composed partly of good and partly of bad coffee. If we estimate coffee at fourteen sols § a pound, which is the mean price, the profits accruing to Arabia from its annual exportation will amount to 8,785,000 livres £ . This money does not go into their coffers; but it enables

* About $8\frac{1}{2}$ d.

† About $6\frac{1}{2}$ d.

‡ About 8d.

§ About $7\frac{3}{4}$ d.

£ 384,343 l. 15 s.

bles them to purchase the commodities brought from the foreign markets to their ports of Jodda and Mocha.

Mocha receives from Abyssinia, sheep, elephants teeth, musk, and slaves. It is supplied from the eastern coast of Africa with slaves, amber, and ivory; from the Persian Gulph, with dates, tobacco, and corn; from Surat, with a vast quantity of coarse and a few fine linens; from Bombay and Pondicherry, with iron, lead, copper, which are carried thither from Europe; from Malabar, with rice, ginger, pepper, Indian sassafras, kaife*, cardamom, and even planks; from the Maldives, with gum-benzoin, aloes-wood, and pepper, which these islands take in exchange; from Coromandel, four or five hundred bales of cottons, chiefly blue. The greatest part of these commodities, which may fetch six millions†, are consumed in the interior part of the country. The rest, particularly the cottons, find their way to Abyssinia, Socotora, and the eastern coast of Africa.

None of the branches of business which are managed at Mocha, as well as throughout all the country of Yemen, or even at Sanaa, the capital, are in the hands of the natives. The extortions with which they are perpetually threatened by the government deter them from interfering in them. All the warehouses are occupied by the Banians of Surat or Guzerat, who make a point of returning to their own country as soon as they have made their fortune. They then resign their settlements to merchants of their own nation, who retire in their turn, and are succeeded by others.

The European companies, who enjoy the exclusive privilege of trading beyond the Cape of Good Hope, formerly maintained agents at Mocha. Notwithstanding it was stipulated by a solemn capitulation, that the imposts demanded should be rated at two and a quarter per cent. they were subject to frequent extortions; the governor of the place insisting on their making him presents, which enabled him to purchase the favour of the

* The bark of the cocoa-tree, whereof they make cables; of which afterwards.

† 262,500 l.

the courtiers, or even of the prince himself. However, the profits they obtained by the sale of European goods, particularly cloths, inclined them to submit to these repeated humiliations. When these several articles were furnished by Grand Cairo, it was then impossible to withstand the competition, and the fixed settlements were therefore given up.

The trade is carried on by the ships that sail from Europe with iron, lead, copper, and silver, sufficient to pay for the coffee they intend to buy. The supercargoes, who have the care of these transactions, settle matters every voyage. These expeditions, which at first were pretty numerous and advantageous, have been successively laid aside. The plantations of coffee, made by the European nations in their colonies, have equally lessened the consumption and the price of that which comes from Arabia. At the long-run, these voyages did not yield a sufficient profit to answer the high charges of direct expeditions. The Companies of England and France then resolved, one of them to send ships from Bombay, and the other from Pondicherry, to Mocha, with the merchandise of Europe and India. They even frequently had recourse to a method that was less expensive. The English and French who traffic from India to India visit the Red Sea every year. Though they dispose of their merchandise there to good advantage, they can never take in cargoes from thence for their return. They carry, for a moderate freight, the coffee belonging to the Companies who lade the vessels with it, which they dispatch from Malabar and Coromandel to Europe. The Dutch Company, who prohibit their servants from having armaments, and who fit out no expeditions themselves for the Arabic Gulph, are deprived of the share they might take in this branch of commerce. They have also given up a much more lucrative branch, that of Jodda.

Jodda is a port situated near the middle of the Arabic Gulph, twenty leagues from Jerusalem. The government there is of a mixed kind: the Grand Signior and the Xeriff of Mecca share the authority and the revenue of the customs between them. These imposts are levied upon the Europeans at the rate of eight per cent. and

upon other nations at thirteen. They are always paid in merchandise, which the managers oblige the merchants of the country to buy at a very dear rate. The Turks, who have been driven from Aden, Mocha, and every part of the Yemen, would long ago have been expelled from Jodda, if there had not been room to apprehend that they might revenge themselves in such a manner as to put an end to their pilgrimages and commerce.

Surat sends three ships every year to Jodda, which are laden with linens of all colours, shawls, cotton and silk stuffs, frequently ornamented with gold and silver flowers. The sale of these goods produces ten millions of livres *. Two, and oftener three vessels, belonging to the English, sail from Bengal for the same destination. They are fitted out by the free merchants of that nation. Formerly their Company had concerns there; at present these merchants have no associates but the Armenians. These united cargoes may be estimated at seven millions two hundred thousand livres †. They consist of rice, ginger, saffron, sugar, a few silk stuffs, and a considerable quantity of linens, which are for the most part ordinary. These vessels, which may enter the Mediterranean from the beginning of December till the end of May, find the fleet of Suez at Jodda.

This fleet commonly consists of fourteen or fifteen vessels, laden with corn, rice, and pulse, for the use of Arabia. They carry out for Asia, Venetian glass-ware, coral, yellow amber, of which the Indians make necklaces and bracelets. They arrive together in October, and return together in February, with six millions five hundred thousand weight of coffee, and with linens or stuffs to the value of seven millions of livres ‡. Though they have only two hundred leagues to sail to regain their port, they employ two months in the voyage; being retarded by the north-wind which blows continually in this sea. Their ignorance is such, that though they are accustomed to cast anchor every night, they think themselves fortunate when they lose only the sixth part of their ships. If to these losses we add the great expence of their armaments,

* 437,300 l. † 315,000 l. ‡ 306,250 l.

ments, the excessive imposts demanded at Suez, and the unavoidable extortions of a government that oppresses all industry, we shall be convinced, that, in the present situation of things, the correspondence between Europe and India by this channel is impracticable.

The merchandise brought from Surat and Bengal, which the Egyptian fleet does not take off, is partly consumed in the country, and bought in great quantities by the Caravans, which come every year to Mecca.

The Arabs had ever entertained an affection for this city. They thought it had been the residence of Abraham, and they flocked from all parts to a temple, of which they believed he was the founder. Mohammed, who was a man of too much understanding to attempt to abolish a devotion so generally established, contented himself with rectifying the object of it. He banished the idols from this revered place, and dedicated it *To the Unity of God*; a sublime and forcible idea! for which all religions have been indebted to philosophy. Mohammed was not the messenger of Heaven; but he was an acute politician, and a great conqueror. To promote the concourse of strangers to a city which he intended to make the capital of his empire, he commanded that all who embraced his law should once in their lives undertake a pilgrimage thither, on pain of dying reprobates. This precept was accompanied with another, which makes it evident that he was not guided by superstition alone: He ordered, that every pilgrim, of whatever country he was, should purchase five pieces of cotton, and get them consecrated, and made into handkerchiefs, for himself, and all the persons belonging to his family, who were prevented by reasonable impediments from undertaking this holy expedition.

This policy might naturally be expected to make Arabia the center of a prodigious trade, when the number of pilgrims should amount to several millions. This zeal is so much abated, especially on the coast of Africa, in Indostan and Persia, in proportion to the respective distances of those places from Mecca, that the number is reduced to a hundred and fifty thousand, of which the Turks make the greatest part. They carry away with them seven hundred and fifty thousand pieces

ces of linen, each ten ells in length, exclusively of those which many of them buy for sale. They are encouraged in these mercantile schemes by the advantages they have in crossing the deserts, and in not being exposed to those oppressive tolls which are so destructive in the sea-ports of Suez and Bassora. The money received from these pilgrims and from the fleet, and by the Arabs from the sale of coffee, is expended in India. The vessels from Surat, Malabar, Coromandel, and Bengal, annually carry away 14,400,000 livres *, and about the eighth part of this sum in merchandise. When these riches come to be divided among the trading nations of Europe, the most considerable share is appropriated by the English. They have acquired the same superiority in Persia.

General view of the trade in the Persian Gulph, and that of the English in particular.

THE English nation had scarce been admitted into the empire of Sophis, when, as we have observed, the Dutch resorted there in great numbers. The trade of these republicans was at first established on a very disadvantageous footing; but being, by the civil wars of England, soon delivered from a rival, whose various privileges were not to be overbalanced, even by the greatest economy, they were in a short time without competitors, and consequently acquired an authority to set what price they thought proper on the commodities they bought or sold. The connections of the Persians with the Dutch were founded on this destructive system, when the return of the English, who were soon after followed by the French, gave a new turn to affairs, and put them upon a more equitable footing.

At the time when the three nations exerted their utmost efforts to gain the superiority, and these efforts turned to the advantage of the empire, they were harassed with a thousand oppressions, some more unjust and odious than the rest. The throne was continually filled with tyrannical or weak princes, whose cruelty and injustice weakened the correspondence of their sub-

jects with other nations. One of these tyrants was so savage, that a great man of his court used to say, *That whenever he came out of the king's closet, he clapped both his hands to his head, to feel whether it was still upon his shoulders.* When his successor was told that the finest provinces in the empire were invaded by the Turks, he answered coldly, *That their progress gave him very little disturbance, provided they would leave him the city of Ispahan.* His son was so meanly enslaved to the most frivolous observances of his religion, that he was stiled, by way of derision, *Hussein the monk, or priest*; a character less odious perhaps in a prince, but much more dangerous to his people, than that of impiety, or defiance of the gods. Under these despicable sovereigns, mercantile affairs every day declined more and more at Gombroon. The Afghans reduced them to nothing.

These are a people of Candahar, a mountainous country, lying north of India. They have sometimes been subject to the Moguls, sometimes to the Persians; but more frequently independent. Those who do not reside in the capital, live in tents, after the manner of the Tartars. They are of low stature, and ill made; but are nervous, robust, skilled in the use of the bow and in horsemanship, and inured to fatigue. Their manner of fighting is singular: picked soldiers, divided into two troops, fall upon the enemy without any order, only endeavouring to open the way for the army that follows them. As soon as the battle is begun, they retire to the flanks and rear-guard, where their business is to prevent any person from giving way. If any soldier attempts to fly, they attack him with their sabres, and compel him to resume his rank.

About the beginning of this century, this fierce people left their mountains, poured into Persia, carried devastation every where, and at length subdued it, after a carnage of twenty years. Fanaticism prolonged the horrid outrages with which they were stained in the course of their conquest. An insatiable zeal for the Turkish superstition, and an unconquerable aversion for the sect of Ali, prompted them to massacre thousands of Persians in cold blood. In the mean time, the provinces they had not entered were ravaged by the Russians,

sians, Turks, and Tartars. Thomas Kouli-Khan drove these robbers out of this country, but shewed himself still more barbarous than they. His violent death gave birth to new calamities. Anarchy aggravates the cruelties of tyranny. One of the finest empires in the world is become an extensive scene of desolation, and a lasting and shameful monument of that destructive instinct that animates uncivilized people, and is, at the same time, an inevitable consequence of the vices of despotic government.

During this general confusion, the English sales in Persia consisted of no more than a hundred bales of woollen goods, two hundred thousand weight of iron, and the same quantity of lead. These articles, taken together, brought them no more than from twelve to thirteen hundred thousand livres * paid in money. This deadness of trade determined the Company to follow the example of their rivals, and to seek those advantages at Bassora which they could not obtain at Gombroon †.

Bassora

* 554,687 l. 10s.

† This idea was not altogether new. No sooner had the English discovered Archangel, than they attempted to carry several articles of merchandise over immense countries into Persia. Their repeated trials, at different times, and at a considerable distance of time one from another, were attended with so little success, that they were under no temptation to resume them, when Ahv was invited by motives of greater advantage, and the earnest solicitation of Peter I. That Prince had, in 1722, conquered some provinces upon the borders of the Caspian sea, in particular that of Ghilan, where the best kind of silk was produced. He thought he could not draw from his usurpations greater advantage, than by erecting a school there, in which his subjects might have an opportunity of learning the English method of transacting business, in the same manner as his soldiers had been taught the art of war by the Swedes. As no real advantage appeared to be gained by complying with his solicitations, they were rejected; and indeed the Empress Anne restored these provinces to the imperious Thomas Kouli-Khan, the most heats of which had proved very deadly to the Russians.

In order to be in a capacity of carrying on this trade with any prospect of success, it was necessary to have the joint good-will of the sovereigns both of Persia and Russia. An Englishman, of the name of Elton, brought this about. His countrymen, carried away by that spirit of persuasion which he possessed in the highest degree, did not hesitate a moment to adopt his views. With the assistance they afforded him, he built ships, for the purpose of transporting in-

Bassora is a large city, built by the Arabs in the height of their prosperity, fifteen leagues below the place where the Tigris and Euphrates meet, and at the same distance from the Persian Gulph, into which these rivers discharge themselves *. Its inhabitants are computed at fifty thousand; consisting of Arabs, fifteen hundred Armenians, and a small number of families of different nations whom the hope of gain has attracted thither. Its territory abounds in rice, fruits, pulse, cotton, and particularly in dates †.

The

to Persia, by the Caspian sea, the English goods which would naturally come by Petersburgh and the Volga. This project, though complicated, might possibly have succeeded, had not the author of it ruined himself. The largeness of the vessels he had built afforded matter of jealousy to the Russians, which was not a little increased by his devoting himself entirely to the interest of Kouli-Khan, who wished to have a fleet, in order to secure to himself the command of the Caspian sea. The title of Admiral, with which he was honoured, doubtless dazzled, and prevented him from perceiving, that by his new connections he had alienated the affections of Russia, which he stood as much in need of as of the court of Persia, for the success of the project he had formed. As he could not be taken off from the interest of the Persian monarch, Russia revoked all the privileges she had granted, and prohibited the English caravans from entering her territories. Thus fell this grand undertaking, which drew along with it the ruin of a great number of persons; but Elton himself was the principal sufferer. After the death of the tyrant who had cherished him, he was massacred by the Persians, whose former favour had excited all this jealousy.

This revolution afforded great matter of triumph to the English East India Company. They, as well as the Turkey Company, warmly opposed the trade to Persia by the way of Russia. All the wheels that they had to set agoing in concert, had not succeeded in rendering the parliament favourable to their monopolies, where the question had been keenly debated. By what happened, they got free of this competition, and their former tranquillity was restored.

* Its walls, of clay, form a vast inclosure, which contain a great many gardens, as well as arable lands. The houses are built with bricks hardened by the sun. They are at no pains to render their houses cool, as they have all terraces, on which they lie in the open air during the nights of summer.

† Their sheep are excellent, and they are at as much pains to procure a fine breed of these as of their horses. The climate is healthful. The intense heats are here agreeably tempered by the north-wind, which blows invariably during the dog-days. It never rains here in summer, and it even rains but seldom in winter. The winter of Bassora would be to us an agreeable spring-time. By its situation, however, it is exposed to two great inconveniences.

When

The port of Bassora, as those who first established it foresaw, became a famous mart. The merchandise of Europe was brought thither by the Euphrates, and that of India by sea. The tyranny of the Portuguese intercepted this communication. It would have been opened again when their power declined, had not this unhappy country continually been the scene of the disputes between the Arabs, the Persians, and the Turks. This last power being in quiet possession of this harbour, have availed themselves of the troubles of their neighbours to renew the trade. The mercantile business, which was before transacted at Gombroon, is at present centered at Bassora, which has recovered its credit and importance.

This change has not been affected without difficulty. At first the people of the country were desirous of confining the traders to the river. They foresaw, that if these foreigners were permitted to settle in the city, they would not be so much under their direction, and might lay up in their magazines such of their commodities as they could not sell during one monsoon, with a view of disposing of them with greater advantage at another time. To this maxim, which was the result of an ill-judged avarice, were added others arising from superstitious notions. It was deemed a violation of the respect due to religion, to permit infidels to inhabit a city consecrated by the blood of so many martyrs and saints of the Mohammedan persuasion. This prejudice seemed to have some weight with the government. These scruples were overcome. Pecuniary considerations were offered by these nations, and they were allowed to establish factories, and even to display their respective flags.

Revolutions

When the rivers swell, and, breaking over their banks, form a kind of sea of a desert not far from the town, there arise from this vast plain noxious exhalations, which subject the inhabitants of this place to dangerous fevers. The desert gives occasion to another disagreeable circumstance, which frequently occurs. The wind that passes over these burning sands brings along with it a dreadful dust: It rises much about the same time with the sun, which it renders invisible, changes the day into a kind of twilight, miserably distresses the eyes, penetrates into the closest apartments, and falls not down till towards the evening. The sky, which is never burdened with clouds, then displays a most astonishing beauty.

Revolutions are so frequent in Asia, that trade cannot possibly be carried on in the same continued tract that it is in Europe. These events, joined to the little communication subsisting between the different states by sea and land, must naturally occasion great variations in the quantity and value of commodities. Bassora, on account of its great distance from the center of business, is more exposed to this inconvenience than any other place. However, upon an average, we may, without fearing to be very wide of the truth, venture to estimate the merchandize annually brought by way of the Gulph, at twelve millions *. Of this the English furnish four millions †, the Dutch two ‡; the Moors, Banians, Armenians, and Arabs, furnish the remainder.

The cargoes of these nations consist of rice, sugar, plain, striped, and flowered muslins from Bengal, spices from Ceylon and the Molucca islands; coarse white and blue cottons from Coromandel; cardamom, pepper, sanders-wood, from Malabar; gold and silver stuffs, turbans, shawls, indigo, from Surat; pearls from Baharen, and coffee from Mocha; iron, lead, and woollen-cloth from Europe. Other articles of less consequence are imported from different places. Some of these commodities are shipped on board small Arabian vessels; but the greater part is brought by European ships, which have the advantage of a considerable freight.

This merchandize is sold for ready money; and passes through the hands of the Greeks, Jews, and Armenians. The current money is converted at Bassora, by the Banians ||, into specie that passes better in India.

The different commodities collected at Bassora are distributed into three channels. One half of them goes to Persia, where they are conveyed by the caravans: there being no navigable river in the whole empire. The chief consumption is in the northern provinces, which have not been so much ravaged as those in the south. Both of them formerly made their payments in precious

* 525,000*l.*

† 175,000*l.*

‡ 87,500*l.*

|| It is seldom there is reason to complain of their fidelity, zeal, or intelligence.

precious stones, which were become common by the plunder of India. They had afterwards recourse to copper utensils, which their mines furnished in great abundance. At present they give gold and silver in exchange, which had been concealed during a long scene of tyranny, and are constantly dug out of the bowels of the earth. If they do not allow time for the trees that produce gum, and have been cut, to make fresh shoots; if they neglect to multiply the breed of the goats, which afford such fine wool; and if the silks, which are hardly sufficient to supply the few manufacturers remaining in Persia, continue to be so scarce; if this empire does not rise again from its ashes, the mines will be exhausted, and this source of commerce must be given up.

The second channel is a more sure one, by the way of Bagdad, Aleppo, and other intermediate towns, whose merchants come to buy their goods at Bassora. Coffee, linen, spices, and other merchandize that pass this way, are taken in exchange for gold, French woollen-cloths, galls, and orpiment, which is an ingredient in colours, and much used by the eastern people in extirpating hair from their bodies.

Another much less considerable channel is that of Arabia Deserta. The Arabs bordering upon Bassora, repair annually to Aleppo in the spring, to sell their camels. It is usual to give them credit for muslins to the amount of six hundred thousand livres, which they buy very cheap. They return in the autumn, bringing woollen-cloths, coral, hard-ware, and some glass and mirrors from Venice. The Arabian caravans never meet with any interruption in their journey; nor are foreigners in any danger, if they take care to carry along with them a person belonging to each of the tribes they may happen to meet with. This road thro' the desert would be universally preferred to that of Bagdad, on account of safety, expedition, and the advantages of sale, if the Pacha of the province, who has established tolls in different parts of his territory, did not use every possible precaution to hinder this communication. It is only by eluding the vigilance of his deputies, that one can prevail upon the Arabs to car-

ry with them some goods, which will not take up much room.

Besides these exportations, there is a pretty large consumption, especially of coffee, at Bassora, and the territories belonging to it. These articles are paid for in dates, pearls, rose-water, dried fruits, and grain, when that is allowed to be disposed of to foreigners.

This trade would be more extensive, if it were freed from the shackles that confine it. But the activity that might be expected from the natives of the country is continually damped by the oppressions they labour under, especially at a distance from the center of the empire. The foreigners are no less distressed by the governors, whose extortions furnish them with the means of keeping their posts, and frequently of preserving their lives. Were it possible in some measure to assuage this thirst of gold, it would soon be renewed by the rivalry of the European nations; whose sole aim is to supplant one another, and who, to gain their ends, scruple not to employ the most execrable expedients. A striking instance of this odious spirit of jealousy happened in 1748.

Baron Knyphausen managed the Dutch factory at Bassora with extraordinary success. The English found themselves in imminent danger of losing the superiority they had acquired at this place, as well as in most of the sea-ports in India. The dread of an event, which must wound at the same time their interest and their vanity, betrayed them into injustice. They excited the Turkish government to suppress a branch of trade that was useful to it, and procured an order for the confiscation of the merchandise and possessions of their rivals.

The Dutch factor, who, under the character of a merchant, concealed the statesman, instantly took a resolution worthy of a man of genius. He retired with his dependents and the broken remains of his fortune to Karek, a small island at the distance of fifteen leagues from the mouth of the river; where he fortified himself in such a manner, that, by intercepting the Arabian and Indian vessels bound for the city, he compelled the government to grant him an indemnification for the losses he had sustained by its behaviour. The same

of his integrity and abilities soon drew to his island the privateers of the neighbouring ports, the very merchants of Bassora, and the Europeans who traded thither. This new colony found its prosperity increase every day, when it was abandoned by its founder. The successor of this able man did not display the same talents. Towards the end of the year 1765 he suffered himself to be dispossessed of his island by the Arabian Corsair Mirmahana. The Company have lost an important post, and more than two millions * in artillery, provisions and merchandise.

By this event Bassora was freed from a rivalry that was prejudicial to its interests; but an unforeseen and much more formidable one has succeeded in its room, which is that of Muskat.

Muskat is a city in Arabia, situated on the western side of the Persian Gulph. The great Albuquerque made himself master of it in 1507, and ruined its trade, which he wanted to transfer wholly to Ormus. When the Portuguese had lost this small kingdom, they were desirous of reviving the trade at Muskat, of which they still kept possession. Their endeavours proved ineffectual; and the merchants bent their course to Gombroon. They dreaded the insolence of the old tyrants of India; and were unwilling to rely upon their fidelity. No vessels entered the harbour except those brought by themselves. It ceased to be frequented by the ships of every nation, after these imperious masters were driven from it in 1648. Their pride getting the better of their self-interest, made them no longer desirous of going thither; and they had still power sufficient to prevent any ships from entering or going out.

The declension of their power tempted the inhabitants of Muskat to the same acts of piracy to which they had long been exposed. They made descents upon the coasts of their ancient oppressors; and the success they met with encouraged them to attack the small Moorish and European vessels that frequented the Persian Gulph. But they were so severely chastised for their depredations by several nations, and especially by the English,

* 87,500l.

English, that they were obliged to desist. From that period the city remained in a state of neglect, which was prolonged for a considerable time by intestine broils, and foreign invasions. At length the government assuming a more regular form at Muskat, and throughout the whole country under the jurisdiction of its Imam, its commerce began to revive about the year 1749*.

The articles of consumption in the country itself are rice, blue linens, iron, lead, sugar and some spices; the returns for which are made in myrrh, incense, gum-arabic, and a small quantity of silver. This consumption, however, would not be considerable enough to invite ships hither, if Muskat, which is situated pretty near the entrance of the Persian Sea, were not an excellent mart for the innermost part of the Gulph. All trading nations begin to give it the preference to Bassora; because it makes their voyage shorter by three months; they are free from any kind of extortion; and impost lowered to one and a half per cent. The merchandise, indeed, is afterwards to be carried to Bassora, where it pays a tax of three per cent.; but the Arabs make such advantage of their boats, and have so many methods of eluding the tolls, that they will always find their account in disposing of their goods at Muskat. Besides this, the dates, which are produced at Bassora in greater plenty and perfection than any other article, and are often spoilt on board large vessels that sail slowly, are brought

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* Its harbour, formed by high rocks, renders it perpetually secure. The town is sufficiently fortified. The excessive heats do not prevent a great dew from falling every night, which refreshes the earth, and renders it fertile. There is not a people in all the East whose probity, temperance, and social humour, have been so generally celebrated. Dishonesty in the way of trade, which is not allowed to be transacted after sun-set, is never so much as made mention of. The prohibition to drink wine and strong liquors is strictly observed, and the use of coffee only is allowed. Strangers, of whatever religion they may be, have no occasion either for arms, or guards, to go without danger thro' every part of this little state. Their austere manners are much adapted to inspire confidence in merchants. No sooner were they known, than Indians, Persians, Turks, Armenians, and Arabs from different countries were seen flocking to them in crowds.

brought with the utmost expedition in light barks to Malabar and the Red Sea. There is a particular reason which will always determine the English, who trade for themselves, to frequent Muskat. They are there exempted from the five per cent. which they are obliged to pay at Bassora, as well as at all other places where their Company have made settlements.

This Company have never attempted to establish themselves on the island of Baharen; which we are at a loss to account for. This island, which lyes in the Persian Gulph, has often changed its masters. It fell, with Ormus, under the dominion of the Portuguese, and was governed by the same laws. These conquerors were afterwards deprived of it, and it has since undergone a variety of revolutions. Thomas Kouli Khan restored it to Persia, to which it had belonged. This haughty usurper at that time conceived the plan of an extensive authority. He wanted to make himself master of two seas, some coasts of which he already possessed: but finding that his subjects opposed his design instead of favouring it, he had recourse to one of those arbitrary acts which tyrants make no scruple of exercising, and transported his subjects in the Persian Gulph to the Caspian Sea, and those in the Caspian Sea to the Persian Gulph. He looked upon this double transmigration as the necessary means of breaking the connections which both these people had formed with his enemies, and of securing their fidelity, if he could not engage their attachment. His death put a period to his vast designs: and the confusion into which his empire was thrown afforded a fair opportunity, to an ambitious and enterprizing Arab, of taking possession of Baharen, where he still maintains his authority.

This island, famous for its pearl-fishery, even at the time when pearls were found at Ormus, Rarek, Keshy, and other places in the Gulph, is now become of much greater consequence; the other banks having been exhausted, while those near it have suffered no sensible diminution. The time of fishing begins in April, and ends in October. It is confined to a tract of four or five leagues. The Arabs, who alone follow this employment, pass their nights upon the island or the coast,

unless

unless they are prevented by the wind from going on shore. They formerly paid a toll, which was received by the galliots on that station. Since the last changes, none but the inhabitants of this island pay this acknowledgment to their chief, who is not in a condition to demand them from others.

The pearls taken at Baharen, though not so white as those of Ceylon and Japan, are much larger than those of the former place, and of a more regular shape than those of the latter. They are of a yellowish cast; but have this recommendation, that they preserve their golden hue; whereas the whiter kind lose much of their lustre by keeping, particularly in hot countries. The shell of both these species, which is known by the name of mother-of-pearl, is used in Asia for various purposes.

The annual revenue arising from the fishery at Baharen is computed at 3,600,000 livres *. The greatest part of the pearls that are uneven are carried to Constantinople, and other ports of Turkey; where the larger compose part of the ornaments of the head-dresses, and the smaller are used in works of embroidery. The perfect pearls are of course reserved for Surat, from whence they are distributed throughout all Indostan. The women have so strong a passion for luxury, and the sale of this article is so much increased by superstition, that there is not the least reason to apprehend any diminution either in the price or the demand. There are none of the Gentiles who do not make a point of religion to bore at least one pearl at the time of their marriage. Whatever may be the mysterious meaning of this custom among a people whose morality and politics are couched in allegories, or where allegory becomes religion, this emblem of virgin modesty has proved advantageous to the pearl trade. The pearls that have not newly been bored make a part of dress, but cannot have a place in the marriage-ceremony, where one new pearl at least is indispensable. They are accordingly always sold five-and-twenty or thirty per cent. cheaper than those brought from the Gulph where they are taken.

A a 3

ken.

* 157,500 l.

ken. There are no pearls at Malabar : but it has riches of another kind.

General state of the trade on the coast of Malabar, and that of the English in particular.

MALABAR is, properly speaking, a country situated between Cape Comorin and the river of Neticeram. But to make our narrative the better understood by accommodating it to the notions generally received in Europe; we shall give this name to the whole tract extending from the Indus to Cape Comorin, including the adjacent islands, and beginning with the Maldives.

The Maldives form a long chain of islands to the west of Cape Comorin, which is the nearest part of the Terra Firma. They are divided into thirteen provinces, which are called Atollons. This division is the work of nature, which has surrounded each atollon with a barrier of rocks, which is a better defence than the best fortification against the impetuosity of the waves, or the attacks of an enemy. The natives compute the number of these islands at twelve thousand; the smallest of which are nothing more than banks of sand that are overflowed at high tides, and the largest very small in circumference. Of all the channels that separate them, there are only four capable of receiving ships. The rest are so shallow that they have seldom more than three feet water. It is conjectured, with probability, that all these different islands were formerly one, and that the force of the waves and currents, or some great natural event, has divided them into several portions.

It is probable, that this Archipelago was originally peopled from Malabar. Afterwards the Arabians sailed thither, usurped the sovereignty, and established their own religion. The two nations united together, when the Portuguese, soon after their arrival in India, reduced them into subjection. This tyranny was of short continuance. The garrison which held them in slavery was exterminated, and the Maldives recovered their independence. Since this period they have fallen under the yoke of an arbitrary prince, who keeps his court at Male, and has resigned the whole authority to the priests. He is the sole merchant in his dominions.

An

An administration of this kind, and the barrenness of the country, which produces nothing but cocoa-trees, hinder the trade from being considerable. The exports consist only of cowries, fish, and kayar.

Kayar is the bark of the cocoa-tree, of which are made the cables which serve for the Indian navigation. This is no where so good, and in such plenty, as in the Maldives. A great quantity is carried, together with cowries, to Ceylon, where these commodities are exchanged for the arekka nut.

The fish, called in the country Conplemasse, is dried in the sun. It is salted by plunging it several times into the sea; and cut into pieces of the thickness and length of a man's finger. Cargoes of it are annually brought to Achen, which are purchased with gold and benzoin. The gold goes no farther than the Maldives; and the benzoin is sent to Mocha, where it procures in return about three hundred bales of coffee for the consumption of these islands.

Cowries are white and shining shells. They fish for them twice a month; three days before the new moon, and three days after. This employment belongs to the women, who wade to the middle in water to gather them upon the sands. They are put up in parcels containing twelve thousand. Those that are not circulated in the country, or carried to Ceylon, are sent to the banks of the Ganges. A great number of vessels annually sail from this river, laden with sugar, rice, linen, and other less considerable articles, for the use of the Maldives, and return with a cargo of cowries valued at about 700,000 livres*. One part is circulated in Bengal, where it serves as small coin. The rest is taken off by the Europeans, who turn it to account in their trade with Africa. They buy it at six sols † a pound, and sell it from twelve to eighteen ‡ in their several capitals: it is worth thirty-five livres § in Guinea.

The kingdom of Travancore, which extends from Cape Comorin to the frontiers of Cochin, was formerly little more opulent than the Maldives. It is probable

* 30,625 l. † About 3 d. ‡ Near 8 d. on an average.

that it owed the preservation of its independency to its poverty, when the Moguls made themselves masters of Madura. The present monarch's father added more dignity to his crown than any of his predecessors. He was a man of great abilities. One of the neighbouring states had sent him two ambassadors, one of whom began a long harangue, which the other was preparing to continue. *Be not tedious, life is short*, said the Prince, with an austere brow. He formed a small body of troops of the French and Portuguese deserters, which, in time of peace, did duty in the citadel of Kotate with as much regularity as our garrisons, and were of signal service in enlarging his dominions in time of war. The interior parts of his country were benefited by his conquests, a circumstance that rarely happens. He established there large cotton manufactures, which were sold at first to the Dutch at Tutocorin, and were afterwards carried to the English factory at Anjengo.

There are two European settlements in the kingdom of Travancore: that of the Danes at Kolechey is nothing more than a small storehouse, where they might nevertheless be regularly supplied with two hundred thousand weight of pepper. Such is their indolence, or their poverty, that they have made but one purchase, and that only of a very small quantity, these ten years.

The English factory at Anjengo has four small bastions without ditches, and a garrison of a hundred and fifty black and white men. It is situated on a sandy point of land, at the mouth of a small river, which is three-fourths of the year choaked up with sand. Its village is well peopled, and a variety of trades are exercised there. This settlement is in general more lucrative to the agents of the Company, who buy pepper, large cinnamon, and very good kayar, on their account, than to the Company themselves, who trade only for fifty thousand weight of pepper, and some linens of small value.

Cochin was a place of great note when the Portuguese arrived in India. They made themselves masters of it, and were afterwards dispossessed by the Dutch. The sovereign, when he lost it, had preserved his dominions, which, in the space of twenty-five years, have been

been repeatedly invaded by the kingdom of Travancore. His misfortunes have obliged him to retire under the walls of his ancient capital, where he lives upon a revenue of 14,400 livres *, which was stipulated to be paid him by ancient capitulations out of the produce of his customs. In the same suburb is a colony of industrious Jews, who are white men, and idly pretend to have been settled here at the time of the Babylonish captivity, but have certainly been so a very long time. A town encompassed with fertile lands, and built upon a river that receives vessels of five hundred tons burthen, and communicates by several navigable branches to the interior parts of the country, may naturally be expected to be in a flourishing condition. If it is otherwise, the blame must lie on the oppressive nature of the government.

This malignant spirit is at least as sensibly felt at Calicut : all nations are admitted thither, but none have the ascendent. The sovereign who reigns there at present is a Bramin. This is almost the only throne in India that is filled by a person of this first class ; in other places the crown is worn by the inferior classes, and even by persons of such obscure origin, that their domestics would be dishonoured and banished from their tribes, if they condescended even to eat with their monarchs. These people take care not to boast of supping with the king : this prejudice is not perhaps more ridiculous than any other. It humbles the pride of princes, and cures courtiers of a piece of vanity. Such is the influence of superstition : it is superstition that gives rise to the universal prevalence of opinion. By superstition artifice divides the empire with power ; when the latter has conquered and enslaved the world, the former interposes, and prescribes laws in its turn : they enter into a league with each other, mankind fall prostrate, and submit to their chains. Accordingly the Bramins, who are the depositaries of religion and the sciences throughout Indostan, are every where employed by the Rajah as ministers, or secretaries of state, and make what arrangements they think proper ; but affairs are not the better managed on that account.

The

The administration of Calicut is bad in general, and that of the capital still worse. No police is established, no fortifications are raised. The trade, which is clogged with a multiplicity of imposts, is almost entirely in the hands of a few of the most abandoned and faithless Moors in Asia. One of its greatest advantages is, that by the river Baypore, which is only at two leagues distance, it has the means of being furnished with teak timber, which grows upon the plains and mountains in great abundance.

The territories that border upon Calicut, and belong to the House of Colastery, are little known, except by the French colony at Mahé, which is gathering fresh strength, and that of the English at Tellecherry, which has met with no disaster. The latter has a fort flanked with four bastions without ditches, a garrison of three hundred Europeans, five hundred Sipahis, and inhabitants to the amount of about fifteen thousand. The Company to which it belongs receives from it annually fifteen hundred thousand pound weight of pepper.

If we except a few principalities that scarce deserve mention, the states we have been describing properly constitute the whole of the Malabar coast, a country more agreeable than opulent. The exports are few, besides aromatics and spices. The principal articles are sanders-wood, India saffron, cardamom, ginger, bastard cinnamon, and pepper.

The santalum, or sanders, grows to the size of a walnut-tree; the fruit, which in some degree resembles a cherry, is of no value; the wood, which is better in Malabar than in any other place, except Kanara, where it grows in still higher perfection, is either red, yellow, or white. From the two last kinds an oil is extracted, with which the Chinese, Indians, Persians, Arabians, and Turks anoint their bodies. It is likewise burnt in their houses, and yields a fragrant and wholesome smell. The red sanders is least esteemed, and is scarce ever used but in medicine.

The Indian saffron, called by the physicians Curcuma, is a plant with leaves resembling those of the white heliobore; the flower is of a fine purple colour; and the fruit has, like our chestnuts, a rough coat, containing the

the seed, which is round like a pea. The root, which has a bitter taste, and has long been esteemed of an aperient quality, was formerly used as a remedy for the jaundice. The Indians make a yellow dye of it, and it is an ingredient in most of their dishes.

The cardamom is a grain generally used in Indian ragoûts; it propagates itself without sowing or planting. Nothing more is required than, as soon as the rainy season is over, to set fire to the herb that has produced it. It is often mixed with arekka and betel, and sometimes chewed afterwards. The most esteemed sort, which is small, grows in the territory of Cananor; it is used in medicine chiefly to help digestion, and to strengthen the stomach.

Ginger is a plant whose root is white, tender, and almost as pungent to the palate as pepper. The Indians put it into their rice, which is their common diet, to correct its natural insipidity. This spice, mixed with others, gives the dishes seasoned with it a strong taste, which is extremely disagreeable to strangers. The Europeans, however, who come to Asia without fortunes, are obliged to accustom themselves to it. The others adopt it out of complaisance to their wives, who are generally natives of the country. It is here, as well as in all other places, much easier for the men to conform to the tastes and foibles of the women, than to get the better of them. Perhaps too the climate may require this manner of living.

Bastard cinnamon, known in Europe by the name of *Cassia Lignea*, is to be had at Timor, Java, and Mindanao; but that which grows on the Malabar coast is much superior. The Dutch, despairing of their power to extirpate the trees in the forests that produce it, fell upon the expedient, during their superiority in Malabar, of compelling the sovereigns of the country to give up their right to bark them. This prohibition, which was never strictly complied with, has been less so since the nation that made it has lost its authority, and the price of the cinnamon of Ceylon has been advanced in consequence of that measure. The present produce at Malabar may be computed at two hundred thousand weight. The least part of it is brought to Europe, where it is sold

fold for the best sort by merchants who are not very honest; the rest is sent over all India, where it sells from twenty to twenty-five sols * a pound, though it costs no more than six †. The trade is entirely in the hands of the free English merchants; it may admit of improvement, but will never come near that of pepper.

The pepper-plant is a shrub whose root is small, fibrous, and flexible; it rises into a stem, which requires a tree or a prop to support it. Its wood has the same sort of knots as the vine; and, when it is dry, it exactly resembles the vine-branch. The leaves, which have a strong sinell and a pungent taste, are oval; but diminish towards the extremity, and terminate in a point. From the flower-buds, which are white, and are sometimes placed in the middle and sometimes at the extremity of the branches, are produced small berries resembling those of the currant-tree. Each of these contains between twenty and thirty corns of pepper; they are commonly gathered in October, and exposed to the sun seven or eight days. The fruit, which was green at first, and afterwards red, when stripped of its covering, becomes such as we see it. The largest, heaviest, and least shrivelled, is the best.

The pepper-plant flourishes in the islands of Java, Sumatra, and Ceylon, and more particularly on the Malabar coast. It is not sown, but planted; and great nicety is required in the choice of the shoots. It produces no fruit till the end of three years; but bears so plentifully the three succeeding years, that some plants yield between six and seven pounds of pepper. The bark then begins to shrink; and the shrub declines so fast, that in twelve years time it ceases bearing.

The culture of pepper is not difficult; it is only necessary to plant it in a rich soil, and that the weeds that grow in great abundance round its roots be carefully pulled up, especially the three first years. As the sun is highly necessary to the growth of the pepper-plant, when it is ready to bear, the trees that support it must be lopped to prevent their shade from injuring the fruit. When the season is over, it is proper to prune the plant

* From 10½d. to about 13d. † About 3d.

quite to the top. Without this precaution there would be too much wood, and little fruit.

The pepper exported from Malabar, which was formerly entirely in the hands of the Portuguese, and is at present divided between the Dutch, English, and French, amounts to about ten millions weight. At ten sols a-pound *, it is worth five millions † : it is exported, with other productions, for half that sum. By the sale of these commodities, the country is enabled to purchase rice from the Ganges and Kanara, coarse linens from Myfore and Bengal, and several goods sent from Europe. The payments in money amount to little or nothing.

Kanara, a country bordering upon Malabar properly so called, was formerly more opulent. It was an almost inexhaustible granary of rice ‡, but has been much on the decline since it submitted to the yoke of Heyder-Aly Khan. The trade of this state, which was carried on freely at Mangulore the capital, is entirely ingrossed by the conqueror, who refuses to let those have goods that do not furnish him with arms, powder, and ammunition. The Portuguese are the only people exempted from this law, who, having formerly been masters of this province, have always retained one store-house, which supplies Goa.

Commerce, which invited Venice from her canals, and Amsterdam from her marshes, had rendered Goa the center of the riches of India, and the most celebrated mart in the world. It is now reduced to nothing, tho' defended by two thousand European soldiers, a company of artillery, five thousand sipahis, and costs the state annually thirteen or fourteen hundred thousand livres †. Superstition, the Autos da Fé, and the monks, extinguish all desire of seeing it restored to its former state. Deprived of so many fertile provinces, which implicitly obeyed its laws, it has nothing remaining but the small island on which it is built, and the two peninsulas that form its harbour ‥.

Near

* 5½d. † 218,750l. ‡ About 59,100l. on an average.

¶ The enemies with which it is surrounded deprive it of all kind of connection with the continent; and their only opening is towards

Near a century ago, a power was established by sea and land to the north of Goa, the growth of which was not foreseen by any body. The name of the founder of it was Konna Ji Angria. He made himself master of

the sea. Two frigates, which can still be fitted out, secure their communication with Macao, Diu, and Mofambique, and are the only monuments of their ancient grandeur.

Macao sends there every year two small vessels, loaded with china-ware, and other goods that have been rejected at China by the European Companies, and which mostly belong to Chinese merchants. These vessels bring back, in return, all the Surat cotton, pieces of cardamom, sanders wood, Indian saffron, ginger, and pepper, which the frigate that cruises to the South has been able to pick up upon the coast. The one whose destination is towards the North, carries part of the China cargo to Surat, and there takes in some cloths, and then proceeds to Diu, to complete her loading.

This place, which formerly was considered as the key of India, is situated at the entry of the Gulph of Cambaia, in an island three miles in length, and half a mile broad, and which has a communication with the main land by a bridge. It had been no sooner conquered by the Portuguese, than the harbour, which is excellent for vessels of six hundred tons, the largest that were then fitted out, served for a retreat for their navy, and became the center of the rich trade of Guzurat. Its decline, commencing at the same period, and owing to the same cause, as that of other settlements, was hastened by a particular accident in 1670. The Arabs of Mascate having got near the island in the night time in their small ships, landed in a concealed place, being favoured by the darkness; and approaching the town, entered into it without meeting with any opposition, when, at the break of day, the gates were opened. All the Portuguese that fell into their hands were massacred, and their vessels loaded with the spoils of the town. The governor of the fort might have driven away these barbarians with his cannon; but he durst not make use of them, for fear of incurring the censure of excommunication, with which he was threatened by a sily fanatic priest, in case a bullet should hit any one sacred thing.

This inactivity of the governor inspired the Arabs with a forwardness for which they were punished. The slaves to whom they had promised their liberty, as a reward for their courage, fell upon them, and made a dreadful slaughter. Those who escaped fled with their booty. Notwithstanding her natural advantages, Diu, owing to insolence, tyranny, and imposition of different kinds, has always been prevented from retrieving this unlucky accident. Mozambique has not been more fortunate.

This island, which the Portuguese conquered from the Arabs in the beginning of the sixteenth century, is situated on the eastern coast of Africa, about half a league from the continent. It is about four miles round, has an excellent harbour, and fortifications that have often been attacked by the Dutch without success. Its dominion, though more limited than it once was, extends still upon

of the small island of Severndroog, where he served as a soldier, and built a light vessel, in which he embarked as a pirate. At first he confined his attacks to the Moorish or Indian vessels trading upon that coast. His success, experience, and the number of adventurers whom the fame of his courage and generosity invited to join him, enabled him to engage in the greatest enterprizes. By degrees he acquired a dominion extending forty leagues over the sea, and between twenty and thirty miles over land; according as the places were situated conveniently for defence. His success and renown were, however, principally owing to his naval operations; which were successfully kept up by his successors. Masters of the coast, these pirates attacked the vessels of all nations without distinction. Besides a great number of small craft, they seized the largest ships belonging to the European powers; the Derby and the Restoration belonging to the English, the Jupiter belonging to the French,

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and

on the continent from Sofola to Melinda. To facilitate the communication between the ocean and the interior part of this rich country, nature has placed in this great space the river Senna. These advantages are lost to the nation that possesses them. Instead of establishing a trade with the Africans, which might become considerable, and the source of mutual advantage, they confine themselves solely to the wresting from them, by the basest means, some slaves, a little ivory, and gold dust. These light articles are put on board a European vessel for Goa. From the east-^{ind} goods of China, Guzarat, and the English ware-houses, a cargo is made up in order to be disposed of at Mazambique, Brasil, and the mother country.

Such is the state of depredation in India, into which these bold navigators who first discovered that country, and those illustrious warriors who conquered it, have now fallen! The theatre of their glory and wealth is become that of their ruin and disgrace. Their situation, is not, however, so very bad, as might well be supposed.

Their settlements that still remain would be more than sufficient to give them a considerable part of the trade of Asia. This revolution must be brought about by philosophy and liberty. When once the Portuguese know their true interest, when their ports shall be entirely free, when those who shall settle there shall find an equal security for their peculiar prejudices as for their private fortunes; the Indians oppressed by government, and the Europeans confined by the exclusive privileges of their Companies, will flock thither in crowds. A flag, that has for a long time been forgot, will soon become respectable. The change we propose will become more easy in consequence of the destruction of Angria.

and three Dutch vessels at once, one of which carried fifty guns.

The plan of the English was disconcerted by these depredations. They had viewed with pleasure the first attempt of these pirates, which threw the greatest part of the trade, and the whole navigation into their hands; because their ships were of greater force and better manned than those of the country. They could no longer boast this advantage, when the vessels belonging to Bombay which traded upon the coast were insulted, the cargoes plundered, and the sailors taken prisoners. The precaution taken, never to sail without a convoy, was very expensive, and proved ineffectual. The convoys were often dispersed, and sometimes taken. These depredations determined the Company, in 1722, to join their forces with those of the Portuguese, who were equally exasperated against these pirates; and it was determined between them to destroy the place of their resort. The expedition was disgraceful and abortive. That which was undertaken by the Dutch, two years after, with seven men of war and two bomb ketches, met with no better success. At length the Marattas, upon Angria's refusing to pay a tribute which had long been customary, agreed to attack the common enemy by land, whilst the English attacked them by sea. This confederacy obtained for them a complete conquest. Most of the harbours and forts were taken in the campaign of 1755. Geriah, the capital, surrendered the year following, and with it fell an empire whose prosperity had been only founded on public calamities. By its ruin the power of the Marattas, which was formidable already, was unhappily increased.

These people, who had been long confined within the limits of their mountains, have by degrees extended themselves towards the sea, and at present possess the large tract between Surat and Goa, where they equally threaten these two cities. They are famous for their incursions and depredations on the coast of Coromandel, the neighbourhood of Delhi, and on the banks of the Ganges; but the center of their greatest strength, and their fixed station, is at Malabar. That spirit of rapine, which they carry into the countries where they

occasionally

occasionally make inroads, is not to be found in the provinces they have conquered. One may venture to predict, that Bacaim Chaul, Dabul, and many other places, that were so long oppressed by the tyranny of the Portuguese, will make some figure again under the government of the Marattas. The fate of Surat is an object of still greater importance.

This town was for a long time the only sea-port for the exportation of the manufactures of the Mogul empire, and the importation of whatever was necessary to supply its consumption. To secure its allegiance, and provide for its defence, a citadel was built, the commandant of which had no authority over that of the town; care was even taken to chuse two governors, who, from their character, were not likely to unite in oppressing trade. Some disagreeable circumstances gave rise to a third power. The Indian seas were infested with pirates, who interrupted the navigation, and hindered devout Mussulmen from making voyages to Mecca. The emperor thought the superintendant of a colony at Coffrees, settled at Rajapour, would be a proper person to stop the progress of these depredations, and appointed him his admiral. Three lacks of roupies, or 720,000 livres *, were assigned him for his annual pay. This salary not being punctually paid, the admiral seized the castle, and, from that fortress, laid the town under contribution. A scene of general confusion ensued; and the avarice of the Marattas, always restless, became more rapacious than ever. These barbarians, who had extended their usurpations even to the gates of the place, had, for a long time, been allowed a third part of the duties, on condition that they should not molest the inland trade. They contented themselves with this contribution, so long as fortune did not throw more considerable advantages in their way. As soon as they perceived this ferment among the citizens, not doubting that one of the parties might be transported so far by resentment as to open the gates to them, they drew their forces near to the walls. The traders finding their effects daily in danger of being plundered,

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called

* Between 30,000 and 40,000 l.

called the English to their assistance in 1759, and aided them in taking the citadel. The court of Delhi confirmed them in the possession of it, and in the exercise of the naval command, together with the appointments annexed to both commissions. This revolution restored tranquillity to Surat; but Bombay, which was the cause of it, acquired an addition of credit, wealth, and power.

This small island, which is not more than twenty miles in circumference, was, for a long time, of little service to the English. Nobody chose to settle in a country so unhealthy, as to give rise to the proverb, *That at Bombay a man's life did not exceed two monsoons*. The unwholesomeness of the air was attributed to the bad quality of the water, the low marshy grounds, and to the offensive smell of the fish used in manuring the roots of trees. Every possible remedy was used to remove these causes of mortality. The number of inhabitants in the colony increased in proportion as these destructive principles were diminished, and is computed to amount at present to fifty thousand Indians, born in the island, or induced to settle there by the lenity of the government. Of these, some are employed in the cultivation of rice, a greater number in that of cocoa-trees, which cover the plains, and the rest are engaged in navigation and other useful labours, which are continually improving.

Bombay was at first considered in no other light than that of an excellent harbour, which, in times of peace, served as a place of refreshment for the merchant-men frequenting the Malabar coast, and, in time of war, as a winter-station for the squadrons that government might send to India. This was a very valuable advantage in seas where there are so few good bays, and where the English have no other but this. The settlement has since been rendered much more useful. The Company have made it the mart of all their trade with Malabar, Surat, and the Persian and Arabian Gulphs. Its situation has invited the English merchants to resort thither; and, by their means, trade is carried on with greater spirit. The tyranny exercised by the Angrias upon the continent has compelled some of the Ba-
nians

nians to take refuge at Bombay, notwithstanding the aversion these people, who never drink spiritous liquors, must have to live in a place where the water is so bad. Some rich Moors have likewise removed hither, in consequence of the disturbances at Surat.

It is not to be imagined, that such a number of men, who, with the advantages of industry and large capitals, were intent on amassing wealth, should remain inactive. From Malabar they furnished themselves with ship-timber, and kayar for cordage: these were worked up by the Parsees from Guzarat. The sailors of the country, under the command of European officers, have been found capable of navigating their ships. Surat supplies cargoes, partly on its own account, and partly on account of the merchants of Bombay. They send out annually two ships for Bassora, one for Jodda, one for Mocha, and sometimes one for China. The cargoes of all these ships are immensely rich. Other vessels, of less consequence, are dispatched from the colony itself.

The private ships of the Company are destined for the factories they have established between Surat and Cape Comorin. The roupees of Bombay, which have been substituted instead of those of Surat, throughout the coast, and in the interior parts of the country, give the Company an advantage of five per cent. over all the nations that are their rivals. They likewise send cargoes to Bassora, Bender Abassi, and Sindi, where the sale of their cloths is the principal object of their settlements. Thirteen or fourteen hundred bales are sufficient to supply the consumption. Their connections with Surat are still more advantageous: this place buys of them a large quantity of iron and lead, and some woollen cloths; the ships are freighted back from hence with manufactures to a great amount.

The ships sent from Europe formerly sailed to the sea-port, where they were to take in their lading. They now put in at Bombay. This alteration owes its rise to the advantage the Company have of transporting hither all the merchandise of the country without expence, since they have been invested with the dignity of Admiral to the great Mogul, and, in consequence of this appointment,

pointment, have been obliged to maintain a maritime force upon the coast.

The detail into which we have entered, may incline the reader to suppose that the situation of the English at Malabar is equal to their wishes. It is nevertheless certain, that they gain no more than 2,250,000 livres * from all the settlements they have upon this coast; whereas their annual expences exceed six millions †.

If the attention of the Company had not been diverted by the great scenes in which they have been engaged on the coast of Coromandel and in Bengal, it is natural to believe their affairs would be in a better state at Malabar.

The fortifications at Bombay would not have been enlarged, then reduced, then extended again, and, in short, altered a hundred different times. Had the plans been drawn by skilful engineers, and executed by honest workmen, those enormous expences, which have excited such a general indignation, might have been avoided.

They would have sent from the Ganges, or from Europe, a fund sufficient to purchase seven or eight rich cargoes every year, instead of three or four very slender ones furnished by a declining and almost deserted trade.

The state of weakness, anarchy, and war, in which the independent kingdoms of this continent, particularly towards the south, are perpetually involved, would have suggested a plan conducive to the welfare of the inhabitants, and to the interests of the nation, by whose influence it would have been procured.

In a word, the Company might have obtained the island of Salsette, which was offered to them by the Marattas, on condition of their assisting them, on a sudden emergency, with five hundred men against the Subah of the Decan: and by this arrangement they would have freed themselves from the shameful dependence they have upon these people for subsistence.

The fertile island of Salsette, which is twenty-six miles in length, and eight or nine in breadth, was taken by

* Not quite 100,000 l. † Above 260,000 l.

the Marattas from the Portuguese. Masters of this post; they threatened Bombay, which is only separated from it by a narrow channel fordable at low water. Now that the English have raised large fortifications, and placed a numerous garrison in their colony, which is become of greater importance, an invasion is impracticable. The Marattas themselves are convinced of it; but they think it is in their power to ruin this settlement even without attacking it. This, they affirm, would easily be done by refusing to furnish it with provisions from Salsette, and preventing its procuring them from the continent. Persons of observation, who are well acquainted with the situation of the places, find something more than probability in these ideas.

The truth is, that, ever since that wrong step was taken, though perhaps it was unavoidable, of putting into the hands of the Marattas all the ports which belonged to the Angrias, those barbarians are daily augmenting their marine. Their ambition will increase with their power; and it is impossible but in time their claims and those of the English must interfere.

If we might hazard a conjecture, we should not scruple to prophesy that the Company's agents will be the authors of the rupture. Besides, that propensity to raise disturbances, which is common to all of that class, because confusion is favourable to their avaritious views, they are devoured with secret spleen at having no share in those immense fortunes which are made on the Coromandel coast, and especially in Bengal. Their avarice, jealousy, and even their pride, will incline them to represent the Marattas as turbulent neighbours, always intent upon the invasion of Bombay; to magnify the felicity of dispersing these banditti, provided they have a proper force; to give exaggerated ideas of the advantage of plundering their mountains, filled with the treasures of Indostan, which they have been accumulating during a whole century. The Company, accustomed to conquest, and having no longer any urgent occasion for the troops on the banks of the Ganges, will adopt a plan that promises them an accession of riches, glory, and power. If those who dread this spirit of ambition, should prevail with them not to embark in this new enterprize,

terprize, they will be forced into it by their servants; and, however the event of this war may operate upon their interests, those who involve them in it will be sure to be gainers. There is less reason to fear a misfortune of this kind on the coasts of Coromandel and Oriza, which extend from Cape Comorin to the Ganges.

General trade of the coast of Coromandel, and that of the English in particular.

GEOGRAPHERS and historians always consider these as distinct countries, inhabited by two nations, whose language, genius, and manners, have not the least resemblance. But, as the commerce carried on there is nearly the same, and carried on in the same manner, we shall comprehend them both under the general name of Coromandel. The two coasts resemble each other in other respects. In both of them, there reigns from the beginning of May to the end of October an excessive heat, which begins at nine in the morning, and continues till nine in the evening. During the night it is always allayed by a breeze, that blows from the south-east; and most commonly this refreshing gale begins at three in the afternoon. The air is less inflamed, though too hot, the rest of the year. It rains almost continually during the months of November and December. This immense tract is covered with a parched sand for the space of two miles, and sometimes only one mile.

There were many reasons why this country was at first neglected by the Europeans who came to India. It was separated by inaccessible mountains from Malabar, where these bold navigators endeavoured to settle themselves. Spices and aromatics, which were the principal objects of their attention, were not to be found there. In short, civil dissensions had banished from it tranquillity, security, and industry.

At that period, the empire of Bisnagar, to which this vast country was subject, was falling to ruin. The first monarchs of that illustrious state owed their power to their abilities. They headed their armies in war; in peace, they directed their councils, visited their provinces, and administered justice. Prosperity corrupted them. By degrees they fell into a habit of withdrawing them-

selves

selves from the sight of their people, and of leaving the cares of government to their generals and ministers. This conduct paved the way to their ruin. The governors of Visapour, the Carnatic, Golconda, and Orixa, threw off their dependence, and assumed the title of Kings. Those of Madara, Tanjour, Myfore, Gingi, and some others, likewise usurped the sovereign authority; but retained their ancient stile of Naick. This great revolution had just happened when the Europeans appeared upon the coast of Coromandel.

The foreign trade was at that time inconsiderable; it consisted only of diamonds from Golconda, which were carried to Calicut and Surat, and from thence to Ormus or Suez, whence they were circulated through Europe and Asia. Massuliparan, the richest and most populous city in these countries, was the only market that was known for linens; they were purchased at a great fair annually held there by the Arabian and Malayan vessels that frequented that bay, and by Caravans that arrived from distant parts. The linens were exported to the same places as the diamonds.

The fondness for the manufactures of Coromandel, which began to prevail here, inspired all the European nations trading to the Indian seas with the resolution of forming settlements there. They were not discouraged either by the difficulty of conveying goods from the inland parts of the country, where there was no navigable river; by the total want of harbours, where the sea, at one season of the year, is not navigable; by the barrenness of the coasts, for the most part uncultivated and uninhabited; nor by the tyranny and fluctuating state of the government. They thought that silver would be industriously sought after; that Pegu would furnish timber for building, and Bengal corn for subsistence; that a prosperous voyage of nine months would be more than sufficient to complete their loadings; and that, by fortifying themselves, they should be secure against the attacks of the weak tyrants that oppressed these countries.

The first colonies were established near the shore. Some of them obtained a settlement by force: most of them were formed with the consent of the sovereigns, and all were confined to a very narrow tract of land. The boundaries

daries of each were marked out by a hedge of thorny plants, which was their only defence. In time, fortifications were raised; and the security derived from them, added to the lenity of the government, soon increased the number of colonists. The splendor and independence of these settlements several times raised the jealousy of the princes in whose dominions they were formed; but their attempts to demolish them proved abortive. Each colony increased in prosperity in proportion to the riches and the wisdom of the nation that founded it.

None of the Companies that exercised an exclusive privilege beyond the Cape of Good Hope had any concern in the diamond trade; which was always left to private merchants, and by degrees fell entirely into the hands of the English, or the Jews and Armenians that lived under their protection. At present, this grand object of luxury and industry is much reduced. The revolutions that happened in Indostan have prevented people from resorting to these rich mines; and the anarchy into which this unhappy country is plunged, leaves no room to hope that they will be frequented again. The whole of the commercial operations on the coast of Coromandel is confined to the purchase of cottons.

The manufacturing of the white cottons brought there, differs so little from that of ours, that it would be either interesting nor instructive to enter into a minute description of it. The progress used in making their printed cottons, which was at first servilely followed in Europe, has since been rendered more simple, and brought to greater perfection by our manufacturers. The painted cottons, which are likewise bought there, we have not yet attempted to imitate. Those who imagine we have been prevented from undertaking this branch, merely by the high price of labour among us, are mistaken. Nature has not given us the wild fruits and drugs necessary for the composition of those bright and indelible colours, which constitute the principal merit of the Indian manufactures; nor has she furnished us with the waters that serve to fix them, and which are good at Pondicherry, but excellent at Madras, Pallicate, Massulipatan, and Bimilipatan.

The

The Indians do not universally observe the same method in painting their cottons; either because there are some niceties peculiar to certain provinces, or because different soils produce different drugs for the same uses.

We should tire the patience of our readers, were we to trace the slow and painful progress of the Indians in the art of painting their cottons. It is natural to believe that they owe it to length of time, rather than to the fertility of their genius. What seems to authorize this conjecture is, that they have stopped in their career, and have not advanced a single step in the arts for many ages; whereas we have proceeded with amazing rapidity, and view, with an emulation full of confidence, the immense space that still lyes between us and the goal. Indeed, were we to consider only the want of invention in the Indians, we should be tempted to believe, that, from time immemorial, they had received the arts they cultivate from some more industrious nation: but when it is remembered that these arts have a peculiar dependence on the materials, gums, colours, and productions of India, we cannot but be convinced that they are natives of that country.

It may appear somewhat surprising, that cottons painted with all colours should be sold at so moderate a price, that they are almost as cheap as those which have only two or three. But it must be observed, that the merchants of the country sell, to all the Companies, a large quantity of cottons at a time; and that the demand for cottons painted of all colours makes but a small article in their assortments, as they are not much esteemed in Europe.

Though cottons of all sorts are in some degree manufactured throughout the whole country of Indostan, which extends from Cape Comorin to the banks of the Ganges, it is observable, that the fine sorts are made in the eastern part, the common ones in the center, and the coarse ones in the most western parts. Factories are established in the European colonies, and upon the coast: they are found in greater number at the distance of five or six leagues from the sea, where cotton is more cultivated, and provisions are cheaper. The purchases they make there are carried thirty or forty leagues fur-

ther into the country. The Indian merchants settled in our factories have always the management of this business.

The quantity and quality of the goods that are wanted are settled with these people; the price is fixed according to the patterns; and, at the time the contract is made, a third or a fourth part of the money agreed for is advanced. This arrangement is owing to the necessity these merchants themselves lye under of advancing money to the workmen by their partners or agents, who are dispersed through the whole country, of keeping a watchful eye upon them for fear of losing what they have advanced, and of gradually lessening the sum by calling for the cottons as fast as they are worked off. Without these precautions, nothing could be depended upon in an oppressive government, where the weaver cannot work on his own account, either because his circumstances will not permit, or because he dares not venture to discover them for fear of exactions.

The Companies that have either success or good management constantly keep a year's advance-money in their settlements. By this method they are sure of having the quantity of goods they have occasion for, and of the quality they chuse, at the most convenient time; not to mention that their workmen, and their merchants, who are kept in constant employment, never leave them.

Those nations that want money and credit cannot begin their mercantile operations till the arrival of their ships. They have only five or six months, at most, to execute the orders sent from Europe. The goods are manufactured and examined in haste; and they are even obliged to take such as are known to be bad, and would be rejected at any other time. The necessity they are under of completing their cargoes, and fitting out their vessels before the hurricanes come on, allow no time for nicety of inspection.

It would be a mistaken notion, to imagine that the country agents could be prevailed upon to order goods to be made on their account, in hopes of selling them with a reasonable advantage to the Company in whose service they are engaged. For, besides that the generality of them are not rich enough to embark in so large

an undertaking, they would not be certain of finding their account in it. If the Company that employs them should be hindered, by unforeseen accidents, from sending the usual number of ships, these merchants would have no vent for their commodities. The Indians, the form of whose dress requires different breadths and lengths from those of the cottons fabricated for our use, would not purchase them; and the other European Companies would be provided, or certain of being provided with whatever the extent of their trade required, and their cash enabled them to purchase. The plan of procuring loans, which was contrived to remedy this inconvenience, never has been, or can be useful.

It has been a custom, time immemorial, in Indostan, for every citizen who borrows money to give a written instrument to his creditor. This deed is of no force in a court of judicature, unless it be signed by three witnesses, and bears the day of the month, and the year when it was made, with the rate of interest agreed upon by the parties. If the borrower fails to fulfil his engagements, he may be arrested by the lender himself. He is never imprisoned, because there is no fear of making his escape. He would not even eat without obtaining leave of his creditor.

The Indians make a threefold division of interest; one of which is vice, another neither vice nor virtue, and a third, virtue: this is their manner of expression. The interest that is sin, is four per cent. a-month; the interest that is neither vice nor virtue, is two; and the interest that is virtue, one. This last is, in their opinion, an act of beneficence that only belongs to the most heroic minds. Yet tho' the Europeans, who are forced to borrow, meet with this treatment, it is plain they cannot avail themselves of the indulgence, without involving themselves in ruin.

The foreign trade of Coromandel is not in the hands of the natives. Only in the western part, indeed, there are Mohammedans, known by the name of Chalias, who, at Naour, and Porto-Novo, send out ships to Achen, Merguy, Siam, and the eastern coast. Besides vessels of considerable burden employed in these voyages, they have smaller embarkations for the coasting-trade, for

Ceylon, and the pearl fishery. The Indians of Maffulipatan turn their attention another way. They import white callicoes from Bengal, which they dye or print, and sell them again at the places from whence they had them, at thirty-five or forty per cent. advantage.

Excepting these transactions, which are of very little consequence, the whole trade is vested in the Europeans, who have no partners but a few Banians and Armenians settled in their colonies. The quantity of callicoes exported from Coromandel to the different seaports in India may be computed at three thousand five hundred bales. Of these the French carry eight hundred to Malabar, Mocha, and the isle of France; the English, twelve hundred to Bombay, Malabar, Sumatra, and the Philippine islands; and the Dutch, fifteen hundred to their several settlements. Except five hundred bales destined for Manilla, each of the value of 2,400 livres *, the others are of so ordinary a kind that they do not exceed 720 livres † at prime cost: so that the whole number of three thousand five hundred bales does not amount to more than 3,360,000 livres ‡.

Coromandel furnishes Europe with nine thousand five hundred bales, eight hundred of which are brought by the Danes; two thousand five hundred by the French; three thousand by the English; and three thousand two hundred by the Dutch. A considerable part of these callicoes is dyed blue, or striped with red and blue for the trade of the Blacks. The others are fine muslin, printed callicoes, and handkerchiefs from Maffulipatan, or Paliacate. It is proved by experience, that, one with another, each bale, in the nine thousand five hundred, costs only 960 livres §; consequently they ought to bring in to the work-shop where they are manufactured 8,160,000 livres ||.

The payments are not entirely made in specie, either in Europe or Asia; we give in exchange, cloths, iron, lead, copper, coral, and some other articles of less value. On the other hand, Asia pays with spices, pepper, rice, sugar, corn, and dates. All these articles taken

* About 100 guineas. † About 30 guineas. ‡ About 147,000 l.
§ 42 l. || Near 360,000 l.

ken together may amount to 4,800,000 livres *. From this calculation it follows, that Coromandel receives 6,720,000 livres † in money.

The English, who have acquired the same superiority upon this coast that they have gained elsewhere, have formed on it several settlements. In 1757 they took possession of Madura, a considerable town, and tolerably well fortified; but they did not fix there with any commercial views. The cottons calculated for the eastern part of Asia, and for Africa, which are manufactured in the kingdom belonging to this capital, are, for the most part, carried to the Dutch factories on the coast of the pearl fishery. The only use the English make of this acquisition, is to raise from it a revenue sufficient to overbalance the expences that are unavoidably incurred there.

Trichinopoly, tho' totally destroyed by the cruel wars it has sustained, is of much more importance to them. This strong post is the key of Tanjour, Mysore, and Madura, and gives them great influence in those three states.

It was solely with the view of securing an easy communication with this celebrated fortress that they took possession of Devi-Cottah in 1749, whose territory is no more than three miles in circumference. There is no kind of manufacture carried on, either upon the spot, or in the neighbourhood, the only produce being some wood, and a little rice. The defence of this factory costs about 40,000 livres ‡; an expence that takes away the whole profits of it. It would, notwithstanding, be a post of importance, if what has been advanced by some intelligent men be true, that the Coleroon might, at an easy expence, be put into a condition to receive the largest vessels. The coast of Coromandel would not then be without harbours; and the nation, masters of the only port in those parts, would have a powerful means of improving their commerce, which their rivals would be deprived of.

In 1686 the English purchased Cudalore, with a territory extending eight miles along the coast, and four

C c 3

miles

* About 210,000 l. † Near 300,000 l. ‡ About 1,750 l.

miles into the interior part of the country. This acquisition, which they obtained of an Indian prince for the sum of 742,500 livres *, was confirmed to them by the Moguls, who soon after made themselves masters of the Carnatic. Considering afterwards, that the fortress which they found ready built was more than a mile from the sea, and that the reinforcements destined for it might be intercepted, they built Fort St David within cannon-shot of it, at the mouth of a river, and on the verge of the Indian Ocean. Since that, three aldees have been erected, which, with the town and fortress, are computed to contain sixty thousand souls. Their employment is dying blue, or printing the cottons that come from the inland parts of the country, and in manufacturing the finest demities in the world, to the amount of 1,500,000 livres †. The plundering of this settlement by the French in 1758, and the demolishing of its fortifications, have done it no lasting injury. Its spirit seems rather increased, though St David has not been rebuilt, and Cudalore is only put into a condition of making a tolerable resistance. A revenue of 144,000 livres ‡ defrays all the expences of this colony. Massulipatan affords advantages of another kind.

This town, which passed from the hands of the French into those of the English in 1759, is by no means what it was when the Europeans, at the conclusion of the fifteenth century, doubled the Cape of Good Hope. There are but a few cottons made or sold there, which, notwithstanding their beauty, cannot furnish any considerable branch of export. Accordingly the new possessors consider their conquest not so much as a market for buying as for selling large quantities of goods. By means of the caravans which come from very distant places to furnish themselves with salt, and by the intercourse they have formed with the inland parts of the country, they have established a demand for their cloths in the most remote countries of the Decan; and this trade is likely to flourish still more. To this may be added the farther advantage of drawing a revenue from the

* About 32,485 l. † About 65,625 l. ‡ About 6,300 l.

the product of the salt, and that of the customs, amounting to 1,320,000 livres *, of which 600,000 livres † only are annually expended upon the settlement.

Vizacapatan is a small town, with little territory belonging to it, and not four thousand inhabitants. Being situated between Massulipatan and Ganjam, it is the receptacle of the fine cottons that are made in that part of Orixá, amounting to five or six hundred bales, which cost 480,000 livres ‡.

The merchandise procured from all these places, and from a few subordinate factories that vary according to circumstances, is carried to Madrás, which is the center of all the English transactions on the coast of Coromandel.

This town was built a hundred years ago by William Langhorne, in the country of Arcot, and by the seaside. As he placed it in the midst of a sandy tract, altogether dry, and where there was no water fit for drinking but what was fetched from the distance of more than a mile, people were curious to know what reasons could have determined him to make so bad a choice. His friends pretended that his view was to draw thither all the trade of St. Thomas, which has actually been the consequence, while his enemies imputed it to a desire of continuing in the neighbourhood of a mistress he had in that Portuguese colony. This settlement has increased so much since its first establishment, that it has been divided into three districts. The first of these, known in Europe by the name of Fort St George, and in India by that of the White Town, is occupied by four or five hundred English, men, women, and children. It is defended only by a slight wall, and four ill-constructed bastions. To the north lyes the Black Town, which is larger, and still worse fortified; and is the quarter where the Jews, Armenians, Moors, and the richest Indians reside. Beyond this are the suburbs, which are entirely defenceless, and full of inhabitants. The three divisions of which the place is composed, two aldees, which lye at a small distance from it, and the whole territory, which is not more than fifteen miles

* Near 58,000 l. † Little more than 26,000 l. ‡ About 21,000 l.

miles in circumference, contain two hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants; almost all of them natives of India.

Among this vast number there are but few weavers. Fifteen thousand artists are employed in printing and painting the fine calicoes that are worn in Europe; and a considerable quantity of common cottons destined for the different sea-ports of Asia, particularly for the Philippine islands. There are, perhaps, forty thousand people occupied in arranging and selling coral and glass-ware, with which the women, in the interior parts of the country, adorn their hair, or make necklaces and bracelets. Other branches of industry, inseparable from a large mart, employ a great number of hands. The inhabitants, who have deservedly gained the confidence of the Company, travel through Arcot and the neighbouring country, to buy what goods they have occasion for. The most considerable among them lend money to the English merchants, who, though not of the Company, have liberty to traffick in the different sea-ports of Asia; they enter into partnership with them, or embark in their vessels goods for their own private account. The business carried on by the Company and the private merchants taken together, has made Madras one of the most opulent and important places in India.

Besides the profits accruing to the English from the cottons they purchase in this town, and from the cloths and other merchandise they vend there, the customs, the duties upon tobacco and betel, and some other imposts, bring in a revenue of 1,200,000 livres *. The continuation of these advantages is secured by a garrison of a thousand Europeans, and of fifteen or eighteen hundred sipahis.

Such is the situation of the English Company on the coast of Coromandel; considered merely as a mercantile body. Let us now examine it in a political light:

In 1751 the English undertook to make Mohammed-Ali-Khan Nabob of Arcot. The execution of this great plan was attended with innumerable difficulties, which

were

* About 32,300l. Sterling.

were at length surmounted, after a series of battles, defeats, victories and negociations, that lasted several years. The new sovereign, who had still many enemies remaining, committed the safety of his person to the care of his protectors, by fixing his residence at Madras; and placed his provinces under the cover of their arms, leaving to them the whole charge of defending them. To enable them to support the burden they had undertaken, and to reimburse them for the money they had advanced, it was stipulated, that they should enjoy the revenues of the country, which, in times of the greatest prosperity, were 12,000,000 livres *, and are still at least 8,400,000 †. It is true, we ought previously to deduct 2,880,000 ‡ for public expences, and as much more for the maintenance of the Nabob; but there still remains 2,640,000 livres ||, clear income to the Company. By this management they keep the Carnatic, which is the most industrious country in this immense tract, in a state of absolute dependence.

To strengthen their influence still more on these coasts, the English had long meditated a plan of making a large acquisition of territory in the neighbourhood of Maffulipatan. In 1767 they succeeded so far as to procure, from the Subah of Decan, the cession of the provinces of Candavir, Elur, Montafanagar, Rajamandry, and Chicacol. From this prodigious accession of revenue and territory, they had begun to think that they had nothing more to do than to enjoy the advantages of their situation; when they saw a storm gathering which threatened to shake, if not to destroy their prosperity.

Hyder-Ali-Khan, a soldier of fortune, who had learned the art of war from the Europeans, had made great conquests, and rendered himself master of Mysore. Relying upon his strength and his reputation, he summoned the Subah of the Decan, and the Nabob of the Carnatic to join with him in driving the English out of Coromandel, threatening, if they refused, to ravage all their provinces. The Company thought both their credit and interest concerned to anticipate the designs of an enemy

* 525,000 l. † 367,500 l. ‡ 126,000 l. || 114,500 l.

enemy who announced his resentment and projects in so high a strain, and they sent out an army against him in March 1767.

Colonel Wood, who had the command of it, marched forward with confidence; when, to his great astonishment, he beheld, in front, an army, punctually paid, and excellently well disciplined, consisting of thirty thousand foot, and twenty thousand horse, with a considerable train of artillery. The war was carried on by stratagem, a circumstance very desirable to Hyder, whose genius was subtle and fruitful in invention. He found means to surprise his enemies in their camp, to carry off their provisions and baggage, to seize their best posts, by procuring the most exact intelligence, to drive their troops before him, who were vanquished, disheartened, and almost ready to revolt for want of pay; and at last he alarmed them with the apprehension of seeing their capital besieged, plundered, and destroyed. The panic was becoming universal, when some timely succours arrived, which enabled the English general to regain his ground. On the 4th of October 1768 he found means to force the Indians to a general engagement, which they had hitherto seemed desirous to avoid. This was, perhaps, the most obstinate and bloody engagement that had ever happened in this part of the world. At last, Wood remained master of the field, where both sides had fought so bravely; but this was all the advantage he gained by his victory.

Hyder, though defeated, kept up a menacing countenance, and was still formidable. Terms of accommodation were proposed to him. He listened to them with no small indifference; and it was not without much negotiation, nor, if some accounts may be believed, without considerable presents, that he was prevailed upon to conclude a peace, after having carried on the war for two years. This prince continues to be considered by the English rather as an enemy, against whom it is necessary they should be constantly on their guard, than as an ally on whom they might depend. Some of the most judicious among them are even of opinion, that unless their nation, by some means or other, gets rid of a neighbour, too ambitious, and too active for its repose,

pose, it cannot securely rely on the power which a combination of fortunate circumstances has given it on the coast of Coromandel. Let us take a view of its situation in Bengal:

BENGAL is a large country of Asia, bounded by the kingdom of Afham and Aracan on the east, by several provinces belonging to the Great Mogul on the west, by frightful rocks on the north, and by the sea on the south.

General trade of Bengal, and that of the English in particular.

It extends on both sides the Ganges, which rises from different sources in Thibet, and, after several windings thro' Caucasus, penetrates into India across the mountains on its frontier. This river, after having formed in its course a great number of large, fertile, and well-peopled islands, discharges itself into the sea by several mouths, of which only two are known and frequented.

Towards the source of this river was formerly a city called Palibothra. Its antiquity was so great, that Diodorus Siculus makes no scruple of assuring us that it was built by that Hercules to whom the Greeks ascribed all the great and surprizing actions that had been performed in the world. In Pliny's time, its opulence was celebrated through the whole universe; and it was looked upon as the general mart for the people inhabiting both sides of the river that washed its walls.

The history of the revolutions that have happened in Bengal is intermixed with so many fables, that it does not deserve our attention. All we can with certainty discover, is, that the extent of this empire has been sometimes greater and sometimes less; that it has had fortunate and unfortunate periods; and that it has alternately been formed into one single kingdom, or divided into several independent states. It was ruled by one master, when a more powerful tyrant, Egbar, grandfather of Aurengzebe, undertook the conquest of it, which was begun in 1590, and compleated in 1595. Since this era Bengal has always acknowledged the Mogul for its sovereign. At first, the governor to whom the administration of it was entrusted held his court at Rajamahul, but afterwards removed it to Decca. Ever since
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the year 1718 it has been fixed at Muxadavad, a large inland town, two leagues distant from Cassumbazar. There are several Nabobs and Rajas subordinate to this viceroy, who is called Subah.

This important post was occupied for a long time by the sons of the Great Mogul; but they so frequently misemployed the forces and treasure under their command, to raise disturbances in the empire, that it was thought proper to commit that province to men who had less influence, and were more dependent. True it is, the new governors gave no alarm to the court of Delhi, but they were far from being punctual in remitting the tribute they collected to the royal treasury. These abuses gained farther ground after the expedition of Kouli-Khan; and matters were carried so far, that the Emperor, who was unable to pay the Marattas what he owed them, authorised them in 1740 to collect it in Bengal themselves. The banditti, to the number of two hundred thousand, divided themselves into three armies, ravaged this fine country for ten years together, and did not leave it till they had extorted immense sums.

During all these commotions, despotic government, which unhappily prevails all over India, maintained its influence in Bengal: but, at the same time, a small district, that had hitherto preserved its independence, still continues to preserve it. This fortunate spot, which extends about a hundred and sixty miles, is called Bissenpour. It has been governed, for time immemorial, by a Bramin family of the tribe of the Rajahputs. Here the purity and equity of the ancient political system of the Indians is found unadulterated. This singular government, the finest and most striking monument in the world, has, till now, been beheld with too much indifference. We have no remains of ancient nations but brass and marble, which speak only to imagination and conjecture, those uncertain interpreters of manners and customs that no longer exist. Were a philosopher transported to Bissenpour, he would instantly be a witness of the life led by the first inhabitants of India many thousand years ago; he would converse with them; he would trace the progress of this nation, celebrated as it were

were from its very infancy; he would see the rise of a government, which, being founded in happy prejudices, in a simplicity and purity of manners in the mild temper of the people, and the integrity of the chieftians, has survived those innumerable systems of legislation which have made only a transitory appearance upon the stage of the world with the generations they were destined to torment. More solid and durable than those political structures, which, raised by imposture and enthusiasm, are the scourges of mankind, and are doomed to perish with the foolish opinions that gave them birth, the government of Bissenpour, the offspring of a just attention to order and the laws of nature, has been established and maintained upon unchangeable principles, and has undergone no more alteration than those principles themselves. The singular situation of this country has preserved to the inhabitants their original happiness, and the gentleness of their character, by securing them from the danger of being conquered, or of imbruing their hands in the blood of their fellow-creatures. Nature has surrounded them with water; and they need only to open the sluices of their rivers in order to overflow the whole country. The armies sent to subdue them have so frequently been drowned, that the plan of enslaving them has been laid aside, and the projectors of it have thought proper to content themselves with an appearance of submission.

Liberty and property are sacred in Bissenpour. Robbery, either public or private, is never heard of. As soon as any stranger enters the territory, he engages the attention of the laws, which provide for his security. He is furnished with guides at free cost, who conduct him from place to place, and are answerable for his person and effects. When he changes his conductors, the new ones deliver to those they relieve an attestation of their conduct, which is registered and afterwards sent to the Raja. All the time he remains in the country, he is maintained, and conveyed with his merchandise, at the expence of the state, unless he desires leave to stay longer than three days in the same place. In that case he is obliged to defray his own expences, unless he is detained by any disorder, or other unavoidable

able accident. This beneficence to strangers is the consequence of the warmth with which the citizens enter into each other's interests. They are so far from being guilty of an injury to each other, that, whoever finds a purse, or other thing of value, hangs it upon the first tree he meets with, and informs the nearest guard, who gives notice of it to the public by beat of drum. These maxims of probity are so generally received, that they direct even the operations of government. Out of between seven and eight millions R it annually receives, without injury to agriculture or trade, what is not wanted to supply the unavoidable expences of the state, is laid out in improvements. The Raja is enabled to engage in these humane employments, as he pays the Moguls only what tribute, and at what times, he thinks proper.

Though the rest of Bengal is far from enjoying the same happiness, it is, nevertheless, the richest and most populous province in the whole empire. Besides its own consumption, which is necessarily considerable, its exports are immense. One part of its merchandise is carried into the inland country. Thibet takes off a quantity of its cottons, besides some iron and cloths of European production. The inhabitants of those mountains fetch them from Patna themselves, and give musk and rhubarb in exchange.

The rhubarb, which begins to be cultivated with success in the mountains of Scotland, is not, as is commonly believed, a creeping plant; but grows in tufts at some distance from each other. There is no occasion to sow it, as the seed naturally falls to the ground, and produces a new plant \dagger .

The musk is a production peculiar to Thibet. It is contained in a small bag of the size of a hen's egg, which grows in the shape of a bladder under the belly of a species of goat, between the navel and the genitals.

In About 330,000 l. on an average.

\dagger Those who gather it, cut the root in pieces, to dry it the sooner, file them on pack-thread, and suspend them in some place or other, for the most part upon the horns of their sheep; not perceiving, that, by this method, one of the finest parts of the root is destroyed, as that which is about the stem must necessarily rot.

In its original state it is nothing more than putrid blood which coagulates in this bag. The largest bladder yields no more than half an ounce of musk. The smell of it is naturally so strong, that, for common use, it is necessary to moderate it by mixing it with milder perfumes. The hunters, with a view of increasing their profits, contrived to take away part of the musk from the bladders, and to fill the vacuity with the liver and coagulated blood of the animal minced together. The government, to put a stop to these fraudulent mixtures, ordered, that all the bladders, before they were sewed up, should be examined by inspectors, who should close them with their own hands, and seal them with the royal signet. This precaution has put a stop to the frauds practised to reduce the quality of the musk, but not to those which are calculated to increase the weight of it; they contrive to open the bags artfully, and pour particles of lead into them.

The trade of Thibet is nothing in comparison of that which Bengal carries on with Agra, Delhi, and the provinces adjacent to those superb capitals, in salt, sugar, opium, silk, silk-stuffs, and an infinite quantity of cottons, particularly muslins. These articles, taken together, amounted formerly to more than forty millions a-year *. So considerable a sum did not reach the banks of the Ganges; but it was the means of retaining a sum nearly equal, which must have gone from thence to pay the duties, or other purposes. Since the viceroys of the Mogul have made themselves in a manner independent, and send him no revenues but such as they chuse to allow him, the luxury of the court is greatly abated, and the branch of exportation we have been speaking of is no longer so considerable.

The maritime trade of Bengal, managed by the natives of the country, has not suffered the same diminution, nor was it ever so extensive as the other. It may be divided into two branches, of which Catek is in possession of the greater part.

Catek is a district of some extent, a little below the most western mouth of the Ganges. Balasore, situated

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upon

* 1,750,000 l.

upon a navigable river, serves it for a port. The navigation to the Maldives, which the English and French have been obliged to abandon on account of the intemperature of the climate, is carried on entirely from this road. Here they load their vessels with rice, coarse cottons, and some silk-stuffs, for these islands; and receive cowries in exchange, which serve for money in Bengal, and are sold to the Europeans.

The inhabitants of Catek, and some other nations of the Lower Ganges, maintain a considerable correspondence with the country of Asham. This kingdom, which is thought to have formerly made a part of Bengal, and is only separated from it by a river that falls into the Ganges, deserves to be better known, if what is asserted be true, that the invention of gun-powder is to be attributed to it, and that it was communicated from Asham to Pegu, and from Pegu to China. Its gold, silver, iron and lead mines, would have added to its renown, if they had been properly wrought. In the midst of these riches it makes so little use of, it is in the most pressing necessity for want of salt, being obliged to have recourse to the expedient of procuring it from a decoction of certain plants*.

In the beginning of the present century, some Bramins of Bengal carried their superstitions to Asham, where the people were so happy as to be guided solely by the dictates of natural religion. The priests persuaded them, that it would be more agreeable to Brahma, if they substituted the pure and wholesome salt of the sea, than that which they used in lieu of it. The sovereign consented to receive it, on condition that the exclusive trade should be in his hands; that it should be brought by the people of Bengal alone, and that the boats laden with it should stop at the frontiers of his dominions. Thus have all these coined religions

been

* In order to procure it, they were reduced to the necessity of collecting together the green scum that is formed on stagnate waters, drying it, burning it, boiling the ashes, and making them into lye, in order to extract the salt. The same operation was repeated upon the leaves of the fig-tree; and no other salt was made use of until the period of which we are going to speak.

been introduced by the interest, and for the interest of the priests who preach, and the kings who receive them. Since this arrangement has taken place, forty vessels, from five to six hundred tons burden each, are annually sent from the Ganges to Asham laden with salt, which yields two hundred per cent. profit. They receive in payment a small quantity of gold and silver, ivory, musk, eagle-wood, gum-lac, and a large quantity of silk.

This silk, which is singular in its kind, requires no trouble: it is found on the trees where the silk-worms are produced, nourished, and undergo their several metamorphoses. The inhabitants have no other trouble but that of collecting it. The neglected cods produce a new generation; during the growth of which the tree puts forth new leaves, which serve successively for the nourishment of the young worms. These revolutions are repeated twelve times in a year; but do not turn to so good account in the rainy as in the dry seasons. The stuffs made of this silk have a great deal of lustre, but do not last long.

Excepting these two branches of maritime trade, which, for particular reasons, have been confined to the natives of the country, all the rest of the vessels sent from the Ganges to the different sea-ports of India belong to the Europeans, and are built at Pegu.

Pegu is a country situated on the Bay of Bengal, between the kingdoms of Aracan and Siam. Revolutions, which are so frequent in all the despotic empires of Asia, have been here more frequently repeated than in any other. It has alternately been the center of a great power, and a province to several states less extensive than itself. It is at present dependent upon Ava*.

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* The religion, laws, and manners of this country differ very little from that of Siam; but their women are still more immodest. Not only are they naked to the waist, but the covering they have about their loins, and which reaches to their knees, is of a stuff so very thin, that nothing is concealed from view. If we may believe the Peguans, this custom was introduced by a queen, who, knowing the propensity her subjects had to sodomy, endeavoured to remedy this perverse inclination, by ordering one of the sexes to be clothed in such a manner as might at all times excite the desires of the

The only port of Pegu that is open to strangers is Syriam. The Portuguese, during their prosperity, were long in possession of it, and it was then in great repute. At present it is hardly frequented but by the Europeans settled on the coast of Coromandel and Bengal. The latter can only sell there some coarse cottons, nor would they visit it at all, except for the building or refitting of their ships; for which purpose they are furnished with all necessary materials (except iron and cordage) of an excellent quality, and at a moderate price. Since the disgust taken at the high rate of ship-building at Surat, Syriam is become a kind of general dock-yard for all vessels employed in the country trade.

Their exports consist of teak timber, wax, ivory, some calin, and an excellent oil for the preservation of ships. The finest topazes, sapphires, amethysts, and rubies, in the world, come from Pegu. They are rarely to be met with at Syriam; nor can they be had without resorting to the court, which is kept at Ava. The Armenians have for some time had such an ascendent, that they make the trade difficult to the Europeans, and even to the English, who are the only people that have formed a settlement at Pegu.

A still more considerable branch of commerce, which the Europeans at Bengal carry on with the rest of India, is that of opium. Opium is the produce of a species of poppy, whose root is nearly as large as the finger, abounding, as well as the rest of the plant, with a bitter juice. The stem, which is commonly pliable, and sometimes rather hairy, is two cubits high, and produces leaves resembling those of the lettuce, oblong, indented, curled, and of a sea-green colour. Its flower is in the form of a rose. When the poppy is full of sap, a slight incision is made at the top, from whence distil some drops of a milky liquor, which is left to congeal, and is afterwards gathered. This operation is repeated three times; but the produce gradually diminishes in quantity, nor is it of so good a quality. After the opium is gathered, it is moistened and kneaded

with the other: but to deprive women of modesty was not surely the way to allure the men.

with water or honey, till it acquires the consistence, viscosity, and glossiness of pitch, when it is well prepared, and is then made into small cakes. That which is rather soft, and yields to the touch, is inflammable, of a brown blackish colour, and has a strong foetid smell, is esteemed the best; on the contrary, that which is dry, friable, burnt, and mixed with earth and sand, is thought good for nothing. According to the different manner of preparing it, and the doses in which it is given, it stupifies, excites agreeable ideas, or occasions madness.

Patna, situated on the Upper Ganges, is the most celebrated place in the world for the cultivation of opium. The fields are covered with it. Besides what is carried into the inland parts, there are annually three or four thousand chests exported, each weighing three hundred pounds. It sells upon the spot at the rate of five or six hundred livres * a chest. This opium is not purified like that of Syria and Persia, which we make use of in Europe: it is only a paste that has undergone no preparation, and has not a tenth part of the virtue of purified opium.

An excessive fondness for opium prevails in all the countries to the east of India. The Chinese emperors have suppressed it in their dominions, by condemning to the flames every vessel that imported this species of poison, and every house that received it. On the Malayan coast, at Borneo, the Moluccas, Java, Macassar, and Sumatra, the consumption is immense. These people smoke it with their tobacco. Those who are going to perform some desperate action, intoxicate themselves with this smoke. They then encounter indiscriminately every thing they meet. The Dutch, who are in possession of almost all the places where opium makes the greatest havock, have been more intent on the profits arising from the sale of this article, than touched with compassion for its numerous victims. Rather than prohibit the use of it, they have authorized individuals to massacre all those who, being disordered with opium, appear in the streets armed. Thus the laws of certain states

* Between 24 l. and 25 l. on an average.

States introduce and cherish passions and opinions intoxicating and romantic; and after having brought these evils on the people, leave no other remedy but punishment or death.

The Dutch Company formerly carried on the trade of opium in their settlements. They vended but little, because four hundred per cent. was gained by smuggling it. In 1743 they resigned this branch to a particular society, to which they deliver a certain quantity of opium at a stipulated price. The gains of this society, which consist of the principal members of the government of Batavia, are immense; no one venturing to expose himself to their resentment by pursuing a contraband trade incompatible with their interests. The coast of Malacca, and part of the island of Sumatra, are furnished with opium by the free English merchants, who gain more by this merchandise than by the common cottons they bring to these different markets.

They send rice and sugar to the coast of Coromandel, for which they are paid in specie, unless they have the good fortune to meet with some foreign merchandise at a cheap rate. They send out one or two vessels laden with rice, cottons, and silk: the rice is sold in Ceylon, the cottons at Malabar, and the silk at Surat; from whence they bring black cotton, which is usefully employed in the coarser manufactures of Bengal. Two or three ships laden with rice, gum-lac, and cotton stuffs, go to Bassora, and return with dried fruits, rose-water, and a quantity of gold. The rich merchandise carried to Arabia is paid for entirely in gold and silver. The trade of the Ganges, with the other sea-ports of India, brings twenty-eight millions * annually into Bengal.

Though this trade passes through the hands of the Europeans, and is carried on in their bottoms, it is not entirely on their own account. The Moguls, indeed, who are commonly confined to the places of their government, have seldom any concern in these expeditions; but the Armenians, who, since the revolutions

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in Persia, are settled upon the banks of the Ganges, to which they formerly only made voyages, readily throw their capital into this trade. The Indians employ still larger sums in it. The impossibility of enjoying their fortunes under an oppressive government, does not deter the natives of this country from labouring incessantly to increase them. As they would run too great a risk by engaging openly in trade, they are obliged to have recourse to clandestine methods. As soon as an European arrives, the Gentoos, who know mankind better than is commonly imagined, study his character; and, if they find him frugal, active, and well informed, offer to act as his brokers and cashiers, and lend or procure him money upon bottomry, or at interest. This interest, which is usually nine per cent. at least, is higher, when he is under a necessity of borrowing of the Cheyks.

These Cheyks are a powerful family of Indians, who have, for time immemorial, inhabited the banks of the Ganges. Their riches have long ago procured them the management of the bank belonging to the court, the farming of the public revenue, and the direction of the money, which they coin afresh every year, in order to receive annually the advantages arising from the mint. By uniting so many advantages they are enabled to lend the government, forty *, sixty †, or even a hundred millions ‡ at a time. When the government finds it impossible to refund the money, they are allowed to indemnify themselves by oppressing the people. That so prodigious a capital should be preserved in the center of tyranny, and in the midst of revolutions, appears incredible. It is not impossible to conceive how such a structure could be raised, much less how it could be supported for so long a time. To explain this mystery, it must be observed, that this family has always maintained a superior influence at the court of Delhi; that the Nabobs and Rajas in Bengal are dependent upon it; that those who are about the person of the Subah have constantly been his creatures; and that the Subah himself has been maintained, or dethroned by the intrigues

* 1,750,000l.

† 2,625,000l.

‡ 4,375,000l.

trigues of this family. To this we may add, that the different branches of it, and the wealth belonging to them being dispersed, it has never been possible to ruin above one half of it at a time, which would still have left them more resources than were necessary, to enable them to carry on their resentment to the highest extremity. The Europeans who frequent the Ganges have not been sufficiently alarmed at this despotism, which ought to have prevented them from submitting to a dependence upon the Cheyks. They have fallen into the snare by borrowing considerable sums of these avaricious financiers, apparently at nine, but in reality at thirteen per cent. if we take into the account the difference between the money that is lent them, and that in which they are obliged to make their payments. The engagements entered into by the French and Dutch Companies have been kept within some bounds; but those of the English Company have been unlimited. In 1755 they were indebted to the Cheyks about eight and twenty millions.

Such is the conduct of these great bodies, who are the sole managers of the European trade at Bengal. The Portuguese, who first frequented this rich country, had the wisdom to establish themselves at Chitigan, a port situated upon the frontier of Arracan, not far from the most eastern branch of the Ganges. The Dutch, who, without incurring the resentment of an enemy at that time so formidable, were desirous of sharing in their good fortune, looked out for a port, which, without obstructing their plan, would expose them the least to hostilities. In 1603 they cast their eyes upon Balasore; and all the Companies, rather thro' imitation than in consequence of any well-concerted schemes, followed their example. Experience taught them the propriety of fixing as near as possible to the markets from whence they had their merchandise; and they advanced up that arm of the Ganges, which separating itself from the main river at Mourcha above Cassumbazar, falls into the sea near Balasore under the name of the river Hughly. The government of the country permitted

permitted them to erect warehouses wherever there was plenty of manufactures, and to fortify themselves upon this river.

In passing up this river, the first town that is met with is Calcutta, the principal settlement of the English Company. The air here is unhealthy, the water brackish, the anchorage not very safe, and the neighbouring country affords but few manufactures. Notwithstanding these inconveniences, great numbers of rich Armenian, Moorish, and Indian merchants, by the prospect of liberty and security, have fixed their residence here. The people have multiplied in proportion through a territory of three or four leagues in circumference, of which the Company are the sole sovereigns. The fortress has this advantage, that the vessels bound to the European settlements are obliged to pass under its cannon.

Six leagues higher is situated Frederic Nagore, founded by the Danes in 1756, in order to supply the place of an ancient settlement, where they could not maintain their ground. This new establishment has not yet acquired any solidity; and there is all the reason imaginable to believe, that it will never become considerable.

Chandernagore, which lies two leagues and an half higher, belongs to the French. It has the disadvantage of being rather exposed on the western side; but its harbour is excellent, and the air is as pure as it can be on the banks of the Ganges. Whenever any building is undertaken that requires strength, it must here, as well as in all other parts of Bengal, be built upon piles; it being impossible to dig three or four feet deep without coming at water. This district, which is hardly a league in circumference, has been full of manufactures ever since the invasion of the Marattas obliged the natives of the country to retire hither for refuge. Here is a large manufacture of handkerchiefs and striped muslins; which have, indeed, rather degenerated since their removal. This active spirit of industry has not, however, made Chandernagore the rival of Calcutta, whose immense riches enables it to undertake the most extensive commercial enterprizes.

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At the distance of a mile from Chandernagore is Chinsura, better known by the name of Dougli, being situated near the suburbs of that anciently renowned city. The Dutch have no other possessions there but merely their fort; the territory round it depending on the government of the country, which hath frequently made it feel its power by its extortions. Another inconvenience attending this settlement is a sand-bank that prevents ships from coming up to it: they proceed no farther than Tulta, which is twenty miles below Calcutta, and this of course occasions an additional expence to administration.

The Portuguese had formerly made Bandel, which is eighty leagues from the mouth of the Ganges, and a quarter of a league above the Hugly, the principal seat of their commerce. Their flag is still displayed, and there are a few unhappy wretches remaining there who have forgotten their country after having been forgotten by it. This factory has no other employment than that of supplying the Moors and the Dutch with mistresses.

Though, in the months of October, November, and December, the frequent and almost continual hurricanes render sailing in the Gulph of Bengal impracticable; during the remainder of the year, European ships may enter the Ganges. Those that design to go up the river previously make the Segogora, where they are received by pilots of their own nation, who reside at Balasore. The money they bring with them is put on board certain sloops belonging to the harbour, of between sixty and a hundred tons, which always precede the ships. The passage into the river Hugly lyes thro' a narrow strait between two sand-banks. The ships used formerly to stop at Culpay; but time has worn off the dread of those currents, quicksands, and shoals, that seemed to choke up the navigation of the river, and the ships have been brought unto their respective places of destination. This boldness has occasioned many shipwrecks; but, in proportion as more experience has been gained, and the spirit of observation has been carried further, accidents of that kind have been less frequent. It is to be hoped that the example of Admiral

Watson,

Watson, who sailed as high as Chandernagore in a seventy gun ship, will not be forgotten; as a proper attention to it would save a great deal of time, trouble, and expence.

Besides this great channel, there is another by which goods may be brought from the places which furnish them to the principal settlement of each Company. For this purpose a number of small craft are employed, consisting of eighty or a hundred boats, and sometimes more. These are manned with black or white soldiers, in order to check the insatiable avarice of the Nabobs and Rajas they meet with in their passage. The goods purchased in the higher parts of the Ganges, at Patna and Cassumbazar, are carried down the river Hughly; those purchased near the other branches of the Ganges, which are all navigable in the interior parts of the country, and communicate with each other, especially towards the lower division of that river, are conveyed into the Hughly by Rangasoula and Batatola, about fifteen or twenty leagues from the sea. From thence they are carried up the stream to the principal settlements belonging to each nation.

The exports from Bengal to Europe, consist of musk, gum-lac, nicaragua-wood, pepper, cowries, and some other articles of less importance brought thither from other places. Those that are the immediate produce of the country are borax, saltpetre, silk, silk-stuffs, muslins, and a hundred different sorts of cottons.

The borax, which is found in the province of Patna, is a saline substance, which the chymists in Europe have in vain attempted to counterfeit. Some of them take it for an alkaline salt, which is found completely formed in the rich country of Indostan; others will have it to be the produce of volcanos, or subterraneous fires.

Be this as it may, the borax is of great use in the working of metals, by facilitating their fusion and putrefication. This substance being quickly vitrified by the action of fire, attracts the heterogeneous particles that are intermixed with these metals, and reduces them to dross. The borax is likewise indispensably necessary in the assaying of mines, and the soldering of metals. The Dutch alone have the secret of refining it, which

is said to have been communicated to them by some Venetian families who came to seek that liberty in the United Provinces which they did not enjoy under the tyranny of their own aristocratical government.

Saltpetre is likewise the produce of Patna. It is extracted from a clay, which is either black, whitish, or red. The manner of refining it is by digging a large pit, in which this nitrous earth is deposited and diluted with a quantity of water, which is kept stirred till it comes to a consistency. The water having drawn out all the salts, and the grosser parts subsiding at the bottom, the more fluid particles are taken out, and put into another pit, not so large as the former. This substance having undergone a second putrefaction, the clear water that swims on the top, and is totally impregnated with nitre, is taken off, and boiled in cauldrons; it is skimmed while it is boiling, and, in a few hours, a nitrous salt is obtained, infinitely superior to any that is found elsewhere. The Europeans export about ten millions of pounds for the use of their settlements in Asia, or for home-consumption in their respective countries. It is bought upon the spot for three sols * a pound at the most, and is sold again to us for ten † at the least.

Cassumbazar, which is grown rich by the ruin of Malda and Rajamahul, is the general market for Bengal silk, the greatest part of which is supplied from that territory. The silk-worms are brought up and fed there in the same manner as in other places; but the heat of the climate hatches them, and makes them thrive every month in the year. A great quantity of silk and cotton stuffs are manufactured here, which are circulated thro' part of Asia: those that are made entirely of silk are for the most part carried to Delhi. They are prohibited in France; and, throughout the north of Europe, the consumption is almost entirely confined to a few armoisines, and a prodigious number of handkerchiefs. As for the unwrought silk, the quantity consumed in the European manufactures may be estimated at three or four hundred thousand pounds weight. It

* 1² d.

† 5 d.

is in general of a very inferior quality, ill twisted, and takes no gloss in dying. It is used for little else than the woof in brocades, and is sold upon the spot from 272 to 288 livres * a quintal. The Companies who have a capital, and industry and skill sufficient to twist it in their own warehouses, obtain it at a cheaper rate.

It would be a tedious and useless task to enumerate all the places where ticken and cottons, proper for the table, or intended to be worn plain, painted, or printed, are manufactured. It will be sufficient to mention Dacca, which may be looked upon as the general market of Bengal, where the greatest variety of the finest cottons are to be met with, and in the greatest abundance.

This town is situated in twenty-four degrees north latitude †. The fertility of its soil, and the advantages of its situation, have long since made it the center of an extensive commerce. The courts of Delhi and Muxadavad are furnished from thence with the cottons wanted for their own consumption. They each of them maintain an agent on the spot to superintend the manufacture of them, who has an authority, independent of the magistrate, over the brokers, weavers, embroiderers, and all the workmen whose business has any relation to the object of his commission. These unhappy people are forbidden, under pecuniary and corporal penalties, to sell any person whatever a piece exceeding the value of 72 livres ‡; nor can they, but by dint of money, relieve themselves from this oppression.

In this, as in all the other markets, the European Companies treat with Moorish brokers, settled upon the spot, and appointed by the government. They likewise lend their name to the individuals of their own nation, as well as to Indians and Armenians living in their settlements,

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* From 11l. 18s. to 12l. 12s.

† It is, nevertheless, one of the most disagreeable towns in the universe. Figure a prodigious number of thatched houses, built at random in a heap of clay, in the midst of which some brick houses, built after the Moorish taste, rise up here and there, just like so many standard trees in our copse-woods; this is a natural picture of this industrious city.

‡ Three guineas.

settlements, who, without this precaution, would infallibly be plundered. The Moors themselves, in their private transactions, frequently avail themselves of the same pretence, that they may pay only two instead of five per cent.

A distinction is observed in their contracts between the cottons that are bespoke, and those which the weaver ventures, in some places, to manufacture upon his own account. The length, the number of threads, and the price of the former, are fixed: nothing farther than the commission for the latter is stipulated, because it is impossible to enter into the same detail. Those nations that make a point of having fine goods, take proper measures that they may be enabled to advance money to their workmen at the beginning of the year. The weavers, who in general have but little employment at that time, perform their work with less hurry than in the months of October, November, and December, when the demand is pressing.

Some of the cottons are delivered unbleached, and others half bleached. It were to be wished that this custom might be altered. It is very common to see cottons, that look very beautiful, degenerate in the bleaching. Perhaps, the manufacturers and brokers foresee how they will turn out; but the Europeans have not so exquisite a touch, nor such an experienced eye, as to discern this. It is a circumstance peculiar to India, that cottons, of whatever kind, can never be well bleached and prepared, but in the place where they are manufactured. If they have the misfortune to be damaged before they are shipped for Europe, they must be sent back to the places from whence they came.

Among the cottons purchased at Dacca, the plain, striped, and worked muslins, are, beyond all comparison, of the greatest importance. Bengal is the only country in India where they are made, as it produces the only cotton proper for that manufacture. It is planted at the end of October, and gathered in February; when it is prepared with all expedition, that it may be ready for the loom in the months of May, June, and July. This is the rainy season; and as the cotton shrinks more, and is less apt to break at this time, it is therefore

fore the most proper for the purpose of manufacturing muslins. The artists who work at other seasons of the year, give the cotton its requisite degree of moistness, by dipping the part immediately under the warp into water. In this sense we are to understand what is said of fabricating muslins in water.

To whatever degree of fineness these cottons have been brought, it is certain it falls very short of the perfection of which they are capable. The practice of the government, in obliging the best manufacturers to work on its account, in paying them ill, and keeping them in a state of captivity, makes them afraid of displaying too much skill. A prevailing spirit of restraint and rigour stifles industry, which, tho' the daughter of necessity, is at the same time the companion of liberty.

The courts of Delhi and Muxadavad lay no great stress upon the embroidered work superinduced upon muslins: and the people of the country, the Moors, Patans, and Armenians, who give large orders, follow their example, and take them as they find them. This indifference hinders the progress of the art of embroidery. The Europeans agree for embroideries, as they do for muslins and other merchandise, with brokers authorised by the government, to which they pay an annual contribution for this exclusive privilege. These agents assign to the women the prices designed for plate-embroideries, and those in chain-work to the men. The Europeans frequently content themselves with Indian patterns; at other times they send patterns for stripes and embroideries.

The sum total of the purchases made in Bengal by the European nations amounted, a few years ago, to no more than twenty millions *. One third of this sum was paid in iron, lead, copper, woollens, and Dutch spices: the remainder in money. Since the English have made themselves masters of this rich country, its exports have been increased, and its imports diminished, because the conquerors have carried away a greater quantity of merchandise, and pay for it out of the revenues they receive from the country. There is reason

to believe, that this revolution in the trade of Bengal has not arrived at its crisis, and that sooner or later it will be attended with more important consequences and effects.

English settlement at St Helena.

To maintain their correspondence with this vast country, and their other Asiatic settlements, the English Company have fixed upon St Helena as a place of refreshment. This island, which is only between twenty-eight and twenty-nine miles in circumference, is situated in fifteen degrees fifty minutes south latitude, between Africa and America, and almost at an equal distance from those two quarters of the globe. It does not appear that the Portuguese, who discovered it in 1502, ever established a colony there; but it is certain, that, agreeable to their usual method, they put on shore some cattle and poultry for the use of the ships that might touch there. These conveniences afterwards invited the Dutch to form a small settlement upon the island, which they were afterwards dispossessed of by the English, who have been settled there ever since the year 1673.

Though St Helena appears to be nothing but a large rock, beaten on all sides by the waves, it is, nevertheless, a delightful place. The climate is more temperate than might be expected; the soil, which is only a foot and a half deep, is covered with citrons, palms, pomegranates, and other trees, laden with flowers and fruit at the same time; while streams of excellent water, which nature has distributed better than art could have done, enliven the whole scene. Those who are born in this fortunate abode enjoy a perfect state of health; passengers are here cured of their disorders, particularly of the scurvy. Four hundred families, composed of English and of French refugees, cultivate pulse, and breed cattle, which are of an exquisite flavour, and of great service to the ships crews that put in there. This settlement, which nature and art have united to render almost impregnable, has, however, one grand defect; the ships that return from India to Europe land there with ease and security, but the outward bound ships cannot

cannot reach this asylum, being strongly repelled by winds and adverse currents. To avoid the inconveniences attending so long a voyage, when made without stopping, several of them put in at the Cape of Good Hope; others, particularly those bound to Arabia and Malabar, take in refreshments at the islands of Comora.

THESE islands, situated in the Mozambique channel, between the coast of Zanguebar and Madagascar, are five in number; the principal one, from which this small archipelago takes its name, is little known. The Portuguese, who discovered it in the course of their first expeditions, brought the name of Europeans into such detestation by their cruelties, that all who have since ventured to go on shore there, have either been massacred or very ill treated. It has accordingly been quite forsaken. The islands of Mayota, Moeti, and Anjuan, are not more frequented, on account of the difficulty of approaching them, and the want of a safe anchorage. The English vessels put in at the island of Joanna.

The use the English make of the islands of Comora.

Here it is that, within the compass of thirty leagues, nature displays all her riches, with all her simplicity. Hills ever green, and vallies ever gay, every where present a variety of delightful landscapes. Thirty thousand inhabitants, distributed into seventy-three villages, share its productions. They speak the Arabic language, and their religion is a very corrupt sort of Mohammedanism; their moral principles are more refined than they usually are in this part of the globe: the habit they have contracted of living upon milk and vegetables has given them an unconquerable aversion from labour. From this indolence arises a certain air of grandeur, which, in the people of distinction, consists in letting their nails grow to an immoderate length. To give a beauty to this negligence, they tinge them with a yellowish red, which they extract from a shrub.

These people, born to indolence, have lost that liberty which they, doubtless, came hither to enjoy from a neighbouring continent, of which they were the original

nal inhabitants. An Arabian trader, not quite a century ago, having killed a Portuguese gentleman at Mozambique, threw himself into a boat, which chance conducted to Joanna. This stranger made such good use of his superior abilities, and the assistance of a few of his countrymen, that he acquired an absolute authority, which is still maintained by his grandson. This change in the government did not at all diminish the liberty and security enjoyed by the English, who landed upon the island. They continued to put their sick on shore without molestation, where the salubrity of the air, the excellence of the fruits, provisions, and water, soon restored them to health. They were only obliged to give a higher price for the provisions they wanted, for which the following reasons may be assigned :

The Arabians having been induced to frequent an island governed by an Arab, have brought the Indian manufactures into vogue ; and as the cowries, coconuts, and other commodities they received in exchange, were not sufficient to defray the expence of this article of luxury, the islanders have been obliged to demand money for their oxen, goats, and poultry, which they before exchanged for glass-beads, and other baubles of as little value. This innovation has not, however, made the English desert a place of refreshment, which has no other inconvenience than that of being at too great a distance from our latitudes.

The English Company leave the country trade to private adventurers.

A Similar inconvenience did not prevent the English Company from making a considerable addition to their trade. The intercourse carried on between one port of India and another was too confined, and of too little consequence, to engage their attention for any long time. They were soon sufficiently enlightened to perceive, that it was not for their interest to continue this kind of commerce ; and therefore invited the private traders of their own nation to embark in it. They lent them their assistance, by taking a share in their expeditions, and granting them privileges on board their own fleets, and frequently even undertook to be the carriers

carriers of their merchandise at a low freight. This generous behaviour resulting from a national spirit, and so diametrically opposite to that of other Companies, quickly gave activity, strength, and credit, to the English settlements. Their free merchants were soon in possession of a dozen brigantines, that were employed within the Ganges, or were dispatched from thence to Acham, Keda, Johor, and Ligor. They fitted out an equal number of larger vessels, from Calcutta, Madrafs, and Bombay, which frequented all the sea-ports in the east. These vessels would have been still more numerous, had not the Company exacted a duty of five per cent. in all the places where they had settlements, and eight and a half per cent. upon all the remittances made by the free merchants to the capital. When their necessities did not compel them to recede from this unaccountable arrangement, these merchants lent their money upon bottomry, sometimes to other European merchants that wanted it, but most frequently to the captains of ships belonging to their own nation, who, not being strictly dependent upon the Company, can traffic for others in the voyages they make for them.

At its first rise this great body was ambitious of maintaining a maritime force. This was quite laid aside when it resumed its operations in the time of the Protector. Having nothing then in view but profit, they resolved to embark their goods on private bottoms; and what was then done through necessity, has since been continued through œconomy. There are merchants who furnish them with ships, completely rigged and victualled, to carry out to India, and bring back to Europe, such a number of tons as they contract for. The time they are to stay at the place of their destination is always fixed. Those which happen to have no cargo to bring back, are usually hired by some free merchant, who engages to indemnify the owner. These are always the first sent home the following year, to prevent their rigging from being too much worn. In cases of necessity the Company will equip them out of their own storehouses; but they

The Company judge it improper to keep up their marine.

they oblige them to pay at the stipulated rate of fifty per cent. advance on them.

The vessels employed in this navigation carry from six to eight hundred tons burden. At their departure, the Company occupy just so much room as is sufficient to hold their iron, their lead, their copper, their wool, lens, and Madeira wine, which are the only merchandise they send to India. The owners are allowed to store the remaining part of each vessel with the provisions necessary for so long a voyage, and any other articles which the society they are concerned for do not trade in. On their return, they have likewise a right to assign to any use they think proper, a space equal to thirty tons, which, by their contract, is reserved to themselves: they may even take in the same articles as are embarked for the Company. Till lately they used to pay the Company thirty per cent. on the value of these commodities; but since the 21st of October, 1773, this duty has been reduced to one-half. It was thought that this indulgence would dispose the owners and their agents more punctually to fulfil their engagements, and would put a stop to fraudulent importations. The spirit of humanity, which is more common in free states than in others, has, in England, given rise to a very commendable custom; the surgeon of each ship that arrives from India receives, besides his pay, twenty-two livres ten sols *, by way of gratuity for every man in the ship's company that he brings back to Europe.

Capital of the Company.

THE Company, disengaged from the trouble necessarily attending the maintenance of a marine, as well as from the country trade in India, had no other object to take up their attention than the commerce carried on directly between Europe and Asia. They entered upon it with a capital of 8,322,547 livres 10 sols †; and, in 1676, having, by fortunate events, been enabled to make a division of cent. per cent. they thought it most for their interest to double their capital. This capital still kept increasing, till in 1702 the two Companies

* Near a pound. † 364,111. 9½d.

panies that had so obstinately opposed each other, threw their wealth, their plans, and their hopes, into one common stock. It has since risen to seventy-two millions * divided into shares, originally of 1,125 †, and afterwards of 2,250 livres ‡.

THE trade was, in the beginning, carried on with great spirit and success, notwithstanding the smallness of their stock. As early as the year 1628 the Company employed twelve thousand tons of shipping, and four thousand seamen. Their expeditions varied in an inconceivable manner; and were more or less considerable, according to the ignorance or capacity of those who conducted them, the different states of peace or war, the prosperity or misfortunes of the metropolis, the fondness or indifference of the Europeans for Indian manufactures, and the different degrees of competition they met with from other nations. Since the beginning of the present century these revolutions have been neither so frequent nor so remarkable. The trade has been established upon a more solid basis, and the sales have risen to seventy-eight millions ||.

Extent of the Company's trade.

Their amount would have been still greater had it not been for the restraints that are laid upon them. To enter into a detail of these would be too long and too minute a task: it will be sufficient to mention, that every ship returning from India is obliged to unlade in England, and that those which bring prohibited goods are compelled to land them at the port of London. The cottons and stuffs that come from these countries pay very high duties; those levied upon tea are still higher. If the government hoped, by laying on so enormous a tax, to abate the excessive fondness of the people for this liquor, its expectations have not been answered.

Tea was introduced into England by the Lords Arlington and Ossory, who imported it from Holland in 1666; and their ladies brought it into fashion among people

* 3,150,000 l.

† Not quite 50 l.

‡ Not quite 100 l.

|| 3,412,500 l.

people of their own rank. At that time it sold in London for sixty-seven or sixty-eight livres * a pound, tho' it cost but three or four at Batavia. Though the price was kept up with very little variation, the fondness for this liquor gained ground: it was not, however, brought into common use till towards the year 1715, when green tea began to be drank, whereas till then no sort was known but the bohea. The fondness for this Asiatic leaf has since become universal. Perhaps the frenzy is not without its inconveniences; but it cannot be denied, that it has contributed more to the sobriety of the nation than the severest laws, the most eloquent harangues of Christian orators, or the best treatises of morality.

In 1766, six millions of pounds of tea were brought from China by the English, four millions five hundred thousand by the Dutch, two millions four hundred thousand by the Swedes, the same quantity by the Danes, and two millions one hundred thousand by the French. The sum total of these quantities amounts to seventeen millions four hundred thousand pounds. The preference given by most nations to chocolate, coffee, and other liquors, joined to a series of observations, carefully pursued for several years, and the most exact calculations that can possibly be made in such complicated cases, incline us to think that the whole consumption throughout Europe does not exceed five millions four hundred thousand pounds. In this case that of Great Britain must be twelve millions.

It is universally allowed, that there are at least two millions in the mother country, and a million in the colonies, who constantly drink tea. It is not unreasonable to suppose, that each individual consumes four pounds in a year; but should the quantity be something less, the deficiency is supplied by those who are less attached to it, and, for this reason, have not been taken into the account. A pound of tea, which costs only thirty sols † in the East, regularly sells in England for six livres ten sols ‡, including the duty; consequently the rage for this Asiatic leaf costs the nation about seventy-two millions §.

To

* About 3*l*. † 1*s*. 3*d*. ‡ Near six shillings. § About 3,150,000*l*.

To oppose the entries of the custom-house to this computation, would argue either ignorance or artifice. It is true, that the amount of the duties, which, according to this calculation, ought to be about 18,000,000 livres *, is hardly half so much; but the contraband trade in this commodity carried on in England is well known. The government itself is so thoroughly convinced of it, that, in order to lessen it, they have lately lowered the duty twenty sols † a pound. In all probability, it would have been still more generous, had it not unfortunately been under the necessity of regarding its customs as a resource of finance, rather than as the thermometer of its commerce. This relaxation, which of itself is not sufficient to prevent the teas in the different ports of Europe from being smuggled into Great Britain, has been rendered more efficacious by the national acquisition of the Isle of Man, which belonged to the family of Athol ‡.

Tho'

* 787,500l.

† 10d.

‡ This little barren island, situated in a cold climate, and perpetually covered with thick mists, does not furnish from within itself any object of commerce. Its population and riches depend on another foundation than its own produce. Its situation gives it an opportunity of pouring in a prodigious quantity of goods upon the western coasts of England and Scotland, and all round Ireland, without paying the duties.

The merchants imported wines, brandies, and silk-stuffs from Spain and France; they imported tobacco, sugar, cambrics, lawns, and other linen cloths, from Hamburgh, Holland, and Flanders; and they imported rum, coffee, and other commodities, from the colonies, not only of Britain, but of other nations. As their warehouses were always filled with all sorts of prohibited goods, or such as were liable to very heavy duties, they seized every opportunity of running them into any of the three kingdoms of Britain. These opportunities never failed to present themselves, as a storm, or dark night, was the time most favourable for this purpose. From whatever quarter the wind blew, it always drove them to a sure market, where they met their associates or customers.

This was not all. The grain that was carried there from England, and with a bounty on the exportation, was converted into drink. As it was free from the enormous excise-duties, the neighbouring coasts, and the navigators who frequented the island, could be served by the brewers there on much better terms than by the English brewers. All the vessels, therefore, on the north-west coast, bound for America or Africa, touched at the Isle of Man, in order to take in their stores of beer there. By all these methods,

taken

Tho' most branches of the public revenue have been increased by an arrangement which deprived the illicit trader of his most convenient market, the India Company have been particularly benefited by it. As their commodities were subjected to higher duties than any others, the clandestine importation of them was more considerable, and was principally carried on by the Isle of

taken together, the public revenue of England was diminished 200,000 l. sterling, and that of Ireland about the half of that sum.

It appeared impossible to check this abuse, without invading the ancient and established rights of the family of Athol, who were in the possession of the jurisdiction and revenues of the island. In states where property is not so much respected as in England, a violation of this nature would have been easily permitted. The British ministry, however, chose rather to purchase all the privileges that were a burden on them, and they came to be extinguished in the 1764, on payment of the sum of 70,000 l. Sterling, and a pension on the establishment of Ireland, whose revenues have been legally charged with a part of the expence of this transaction, of the advantage whereof she partakes.

It was much to be feared, that smuggling, after being banished from the Isle of Man, would have found a safe retreat in the islands of Faro, belonging to Denmark. The wisest and most rigorous measures were then taken to prevent this; and, to these, other precautions have since been added. The state which, before the last war, maintained only ten thousand seamen in the time of peace, now employs about sixteen thousand. Their activity and courage, virtues essential to this profession, are employed in cruizing briskly against smugglers.

Though all the parts of administration have felt the effects of these arrangements, the India Company have, in several respects, been the greatest gainers. As their goods were burdened with heavier duties than any other commodities, the clandestine importation of them was proportionably more considerable, and was principally carried on by the Isle of Man, admirably situated for the reception of every thing that came from the north. The influence of these precautions has become apparent in the sales of foreign companies, where teas, the favourite article of contraband trade, have fallen in their price. The English Company will not fail in time coming to make provision in proportion to the demands, and to take themselves the profit which their rivals came to snatch from them, even in their own proper territories. If any thing can moderate the noise made about this late success, it is the discovery some little time ago at Labrador, of a kind of tea that begins to be known under the name of *biperion*. The northern parts of America have already substituted it in place of the tea of Asia, and it is not impossible but that the mother country will follow the example of her colonies. This new fancy cannot possibly take, without occasioning a great blank in the trade of the Company.

of Man, which is admirably situated to receive vessels from the north. Tea was the favourite object of this contraband trade. The English Company will not fail, in future, to provide a stock proportionable to their demands, and to secure to themselves the advantages which their rivals ravished from them within the limits of their own empire.

The teas and other merchandise that arrive from India are paid for in money. The government, which is not ignorant of this, has limited the exportation of specie to 6,750,000 livres *. This unaccountable restriction, so unworthy a commercial people, neither has been or can be carried into execution. The sums registered are always much higher; but this indulgence does not prevent considerable sums being clandestinely carried abroad without the knowledge of the custom-house officers. These fraudulent practices have increased in proportion as the trade has become more extensive; and the money sent out of the kingdom has been long computed at one third of the profit arising from the sales.

This exportation of specie would have been more considerable, if the Company had adhered to that article in their charter, by which it is provided, that they shall export, in merchandise of their own nation, the value of the tenth part of what they take in money upon their vessels. They have constantly made a charge for much greater sums in brass, lead, and English cloths, without reckoning the profits made in India upon iron from Sweden and Biscay, and other articles taken from several countries of Europe.

Their advocates, in order to reinstate them in the good opinion of the public, which they have but seldom enjoyed, have frequently asserted, that this body occasioned as much money to be brought into the country as they carried out of it. This plea caused such a warm altercation in the beginning of the present century, that the government thought the question not unworthy of its attention. It was found, by consulting the registers, that, from the end of December 1712 to the end of De-

F f 2

cember

* About 295,000 l.

cember 1717, 52,563,037 livres 10 sols * had been exported to India. From all circumstances it appeared, that the cash clandestinely carried out, amounted, at least, to one half; and that, consequently, there could be no mistake in estimating the amount of both these sums at 78,844,566 livres 5 sols †. The sums remitted home by the Company, in the same space of time, amounted to 75,058,391 livres 5 sols ‡. Thus, supposing these calculations to be just, the consumption of the Asiatic productions in England, for five years, should not have risen so high as 3,786,165 livres ||: but there is reason to believe it rose much higher; and that a great deal of merchandise, apparently sold to foreigners, never stirred out of the kingdom. The partiality that has lately prevailed in favour of Scots and Irish linens, printed in England, and the increase of the silk manufacture, by lessening the demand for contraband goods, must necessarily render the commerce of the East more advantageous to the nation. Before the year 1720, Great Britain annually consumed three millions seven hundred and fifty thousand yards of India cottons; but this consumption is greatly diminished.

*Dividends of
the proprietors.*

It is not to be supposed, that any changes could happen in the relative state of the Indian trade with the government in general, without producing some alterations in the private fortunes of the proprietors. Their profits have, at certain periods, been enormous; at others, very trifling. The shares have been regulated in conformity to these variations. The dividend, which, for a long time, had been no more than seven per cent. was, in 1743, raised to eight. It was afterwards reduced to six; in 1766 it rose to ten, and since that time to twelve and a half. This was more than the situation of the Company could afford; since, at this period, they had little more remaining than their original capital. If this be the case, how has it happened that so small a capital should, in the opinion of the public, have acquired

* 2,299,632 l. 17 s. 9 d $\frac{1}{4}$.

† 3,449,449 l.

‡ 3,283,804 l. 12 s. 1 d $\frac{1}{2}$.

|| 165,644 l. 14 s. 7 d $\frac{1}{2}$.

red the value of 280,000,000 *, which is the amount according to the price of the stock †?

This objection is not answerable. The enthusiasm of the English is well known. It has repeatedly been

F f 3

excited

* About 12,250,000 l.

† Intoxicated as they then were, they might have passed this matter still further, had they not been stoppt by parliament, who, losing sight of the precious trust committed to their care, passed an act, which may be attended with the most dangerous consequences. This outrage upon the law of property, that knows no prescription, will be an eternal reproach to them, even among people of prudence, who thought, as well as they, that the time was not yet come for raising their shares to such a height; and the real situation of the Company was in favour of their opinion. According to the state given by the Direction itself, 17th May 1767, they owed about 6,004,145 livres, (262,681 l. 6 s. 10 d. halfpenny, Sterling.) These debts being public, it is not possible to conceal them; and yet there are circumstances which might lead us to suppose, that it was dangerous to expose them to the eye of the public in their present well-known situation. The interest the Company had to appear rich, has given reason to suspect, that they have concealed some private debts in Europe, and more especially in India. A suspicion, however, that has no other foundation than bare possibilities, is not to be put in the balance with a public and legal declaration. Let us then see what resources the Company have to counterbalance these large debts.

The most evident part of their means is what is owing them by government. They lent to government in 1698, 2,000,000 of livres, (87,500 l. Sterling;) in 1708, 1,200,000, (52,500 l. Sterling;) in 1744, 1,000,000, (43,750 l. Sterling.) The sole object of these aids was to obtain a prorogation or renewal of their exclusive charter. The interest paid them by the state has been always equal to what was paid by them to their other creditors; and it was never reduced to three per cent. but in the 1757, with the rest of the national debt. The other effects the Company are possessed of in England, and the money owing them, do not exceed 179,989 livres, (7,874 l. 10 s. 4 d. halfpenny, Sterling;) so that the estate of the Company in Europe does not exceed 4,379,989 livres, (191,624 l. 10 s. 4 d. halfpenny, Sterling.)

These funds circulating in the way of trade, do not appear to be so easily ascertained. Those speculators who have the best opinion of their situation will not allow them to have above 4,500,000 livres, (196,875 l. Sterling,) which appears to them more than sufficient for these expeditions. They are in a mistake. The Company have themselves declared, that they have in India, at sea, or in their warehouses, 5,284,966 livres, (231,217 l. 3 s. 3 d. Sterling,) which added to what they are in possession of in Europe, makes a capital of 9,664,955 livres, (422,841 l. 15 s. 7 d. halfpenny, Sterling.)

This is not all. The amount of their riches is increased by other considerations; for the most part very valuable. Six hundred and

fifty

excited by circumstances that would not have made the least impression on the most volatile and trifling people. An important event has forcibly drawn the whole nation into its vortex. They have abandoned themselves, with all the impetuosity of their character, to the vast prospects that have been opened to them by the late conquest of Bengal *.

SHOULD

fifty thousand livres (28,437 l. 10 s. Sterling) are owing them by one Nabob; and they have lent 74,000 (3,237 l. 10 s. Sterling) to the owners of ships taken up on their account. Their dead stock in Asia amounts to 400,000 livres, (17,500 l. Sterling;) their warehouses in England are worth 40,000, (1,750 l. Sterling;) and their fortifications in India cannot be valued at less than 664,335, (29,064 l. 13 s. 1 d. halfpenny, Sterling.) Their old possessions, valued by their income, which amounts to 439,000 livres, (19,206 l. 5 s. Sterling,) ought to be reckoned at 2,195,000 livres, (96,031 l. 5 s. Sterling.) The net produce of twenty five vessels expected in the year 1767 will be 1,817,168 livres, (79,501 l. Sterling.) All these sums together make the amount of their funds to be 5,831,104 livres, (255,110 l. 16 s. Sterling,) which added to 9,664,955 livres, (422,841 l. 15 s. 7 d. halfpenny, Sterling,) makes 15,496,059 livres, (677,952 l. 11 s. 7 d. halfpenny, Sterling.)

Malcontents, on the other hand, have found out more than exaggeration in this calculation. According to them, all the sums of money owing by the Indian princes are only mere chimeras, wherewith, at all times, they have amused Europe. The forts built by them, so much boasted of, are of little value in themselves, and will be of none at all at the expiration of their charter, whatever might have been the expence of building them. There is none of their territorial possessions which does not cost more to defend than what is drawn from it. The profits arising from the sales are allotted to pay the dividend, and do not enlarge the capital stock. In short, among so many pretended funds, the small number of those that have any real foundation, must hardly be sufficient to discharge the debts, that have either been forgot through hurry, or could not be cleared up, by reason of the distance. These snarlers go so far as to reduce the capital of the Company to 9,664,955 livres, (422,841 l. 15 s. 7 d. halfpenny, Sterling,) owing to them by government, or employed by them in trade. There only remains, according to their hypothesis, the debt of 6,004,145 livres, (262,681 l. 6 s. 10 d. halfpenny, Sterling,) once paid, and their proper funds, which are only 2,800,000 livres, (122,500 l. Sterling,) though they appear to be 3,200,000 livres, (140,000 l. Sterling,) and 860,810 livres, (37,660 l. 8 s. 9 d. Sterling,) over and above that sum.

If it were so, could it be possible that a capital of 3,660,810 livres, (160,160 l. 8 s. 9 d. Sterling,) would have acquired, in the opinion of the public, the value of near 9,000,000 livres, (393,750 l. Sterling,) which is the amount, according to the price of stock?

* England laid the foundation of her empire in this country,

SHOULD it be asked, if this astonishing revolution, which has had so sensible an influence, both upon the state of the inhabitants of this part of Asia, and upon the trade of the European nations in these climates, hath been the consequence and result of a series of political schemes?—If it be one of those events, of which prudence has

Conquest of Bengal. Advantages drawn by the English from this acquisition, and the conduct they have hitherto observed.

a right to claim the sole merit? We shall answer; No.
Chance

as opulent as extensive, in the 1757, when she gave up the provinces of Burdwan, Midnapour, and Chatigam; but it was not till after the French were driven entirely out of India, that she erected this grand superstructure. Her exertions were amazing. The victories with which they were crowned had the appearance of being decisive, yet nothing was brought to a conclusion. The conquered always found out some resource or another, and matters were constantly to begin again. Nothing prevented the conquerors from putting an end to so many calamities but the confining their ambition within proper bounds: but they would have all, or nothing; and they had taken the resolution, not to stop till they had found out a person mean enough to condescend to take the name of Subah, under their protection or dependence. An old Mogul, who wished to curry favour with the English, that they might assist him in bringing about his re-establishment, made them a proposal to take up the Subahship on their account. He told them, that the imperial standard with which this title to authority was dignified, would efface the remembrance of the outrages they had committed, give their usurpation an appearance of justice, and save them all the expences that it would cost to maintain a right of conquest, that might be disputed, or was not recognised. The sagacious Clive was undoubtedly afraid of the impression this novelty would make upon the imaginations of the people; and he persuaded his countrymen to rest contented with the absolute power of a prince, for fourteen or fifteen years, under the modest title of a *farmer*.

Since that period, the Company pay annually to the dethroned Emperor, twenty-six lacs of rupees, and two-thirds of that sum to the phantom of a Subah, whom they keep as a prisoner at Moudabadat. They are, besides, burdened with all the expences requisite for the administration and defence of the country, which must of necessity be very considerable. On these conditions, all the public revenues of Bengal go into their coffers, and are at their sole disposal.

People have differed much in opinion with respect to the net produce of this rich and extensive conquest. Ignorance has heaped up contradictions on contradictions; policy has made matters still more mysterious; private interest has confounded every thing. It would be the highest presumption for any one to pretend to remove
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Chance alone has determined it: and the circumstances that have opened this field of glory and power to the English, far from promising them the success they have had, seemed, on the contrary, to threaten them with the most fatal reverse of fortune.

A pernicious custom had, for some time, prevailed in these countries. The governors of all the European settlements took upon them to grant an asylum to such of the natives of the country as were afraid of oppression or punishment. As they received very considerable sums in return for their protection, they overlooked the danger to which the interests of their principals were exposed by this proceeding. One of the chief officers of Bengal, who was apprized of this resource, took refuge among the English at Calcutta, to avoid the punishment due to his treachery. He was taken under their protection. The Subah, justly irritated, put himself at the head of his army, attacked the place, and took it. He put the garrison into a close dungeon, where they were suffocated in the space of twelve hours.

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the darkness into which so many intelligent people have not been able to penetrate. Mean time, we hope to be forgiven for hazarding our conjectures, and pointing out the ground on which they are supported.

The annual sale of the Company may be computed at three millions Sterling. The difference betwixt buying and selling should be about one half. Consequently, the goods have been paid with one million and a half Sterling.

We have good reason to think, that, for some years past, the English have exported to India as much value in drapery and other European goods as they have done in cash. They have only therefore sent abroad 750,000 l. Sterling.

Not only that exportation of cash has entirely ceased, but it has also been settled, that, after the liquidation of the debts of Asia, and advances sufficient for the factories, the mother country should send 500,000 pounds in cash. We may therefore value the net revenue of Bengal at 1,250,000 pounds Sterling.

Our conjectures coincide very nearly with Mr Dow's calculation. He says, that in the month of April 1766, the revenues of Bengal amounted to 33,025,968 rupees, and that the expences amounted to 22,450,000 rupees, or 1,321,994 l. 1s. 3d. Sterling.

Let us deduct from that sum the 400,000 pounds which the Company are obliged to give to government for the protection they have got from it, or for favours which they expect, and we shall have a pretty just idea of the real value of Bengal to the Company.

Three and twenty of them only remained alive. These wretched people offered large sums to the keeper of their prison, to prevail upon him to get their deplorable situation represented to the prince. Their cries and lamentations were sufficient informations to the people, who were touched with compassion; but no one would venture to address the despotic monarch upon the subject. The expiring English were told, that he was asleep; and there was not, perhaps, a single person in Bengal who thought that the tyrant's slumbers should be interrupted, even to preserve the lives of one hundred and fifty unfortunate men.

Admiral Watson, who was just arrived in India with his squadron, and Colonel Clive, who had so remarkably distinguished himself in the war of the Carnatic, did not hesitate to revenge the cause of their countrymen. They got together the English, who had been dispersed, and were flying from place to place, they went up the Ganges in the month of December 1756, retook Calcutta, made themselves masters of several other places, and gained a compleat victory over the Subah.

Such a rapid and extensive success becomes in a manner inconceivable, when we consider that it was only with a body of five hundred men that the English were to stand against the whole force of Bengal. But, if their superiority was partly owing to their better discipline, and to other evident advantages that the Europeans have in battle over the Indian powers, the ambition of eastern chiefs, the avarice of their ministers, and the nature of a government, whose only springs are fear and present interest, were of still more effectual service to them: they had experience enough to take advantage of the concurrence of these several circumstances in their first attack, and in all that succeeded it. The Subah became detested by all his own people, as tyrants generally are; his principal officers sold their interest to the English; he was betrayed at the head of his army, the greatest part of which refused to engage; and he himself fell into the hands of his enemies, who caused him to be strangled in prison.

They disposed of the Subahship in favour of Jaffier-Ally-Khan, the ringleader of the conspiracy; who ce-

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ded to the Company some provinces, with a grant of every privilege, exemption, and favour, to which they could have any pretence. But he soon grew weary of the yoke he had brought upon himself, and he secretly looked out for means to get rid of it. His designs were discovered, and he was arrested in the center of his own capital.

Cossim-Ally-Khan, his nephew, was proclaimed in his stead. He had purchased that usurpation with an immense sum of money. But he did not enjoy it long. Impatient of the yoke, as his predecessor had been, he gave some tokens of his intractability, and refused to submit to the laws the Company imposed upon him. Upon this the war broke out again. The same Jaffer-Ally-Khan, whom the English kept a prisoner, was again proclaimed Subah of Bengal. They marched against Cossim-Ally-Khan. His general officers were corrupted: he was betrayed and entirely defeated; but, while he lost his dignity, he had the good fortune to preserve the immense treasures he had amassed,

Notwithstanding this revolution, Cossim-Ally did not drop his hopes of vengeance. Full of resentment, and loaded with treasure, he set out for the Nabob of Banarez, chief vizir in the Mogul's empire. He and all the neighbouring princes re-united in opposition to the common enemy, who threatened them all equally. But now the contest lay no longer between them and a handful of Europeans, just arrived from the coast of Coromandel; they were to engage with the whole strength of Bengal, of which the English were masters. Elated with their successes, they did not wait to be attacked; they set out directly, and made head against so formidable a league, marching on with all the confidence which Clive could inspire, a leader whose name seemed to have become the pledge of conquest. However, Clive did not care to hazard any thing. Part of the campaign was spent in negotiations; but in time the treasures which the English had drawn from Bengal served to ensure them new conquests. The heads of the Indian army were corrupted; and when the Nabob of Banarez was desirous of coming to action, he was obliged to fly with his men without ever being able to engage.

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By this victory, the country of Banarez fell into the hands of the English; and it seemed as if nothing could hinder them from annexing that sovereignty to that of Bengal: but, either from moderation or prudence, they were content to levy eight millions by contribution: and they offered peace to the Nabob on conditions which would render him incapable of doing them any hurt; but, such as they were, he most readily agreed to them, that he might regain the possession of his own provinces.

In the midst of these calamities, Cossim-Ally still found means to preserve part of his treasures, and retired to the Cheyks, a people situated in the neighbourhood of Delhi, from whence he made an attempt to procure some allies, and to raise a body of men to oppose the English.

While matters were thus circumstanced in Bengal, the Mogul, having been driven out of Delhi by the Pattans, by whom his son had been set up in his room, was wandering from one province to another, in search of a place of refuge in his own territories, and requesting succour from his own vassals, but without success. Abandoned by his subjects, betrayed by his allies, without support, without any army, he was allured by the power of the English, and implored their protection; they promised to conduct him to Delhi, and re-establish him on his throne; but they began by causing him to cede to them before-hand the absolute sovereignty over Bengal. This cession was made by an authentic act, and attended with all the formalities usually practised throughout the Mogul empire.

The English, securely possessed of this title, which was to give a kind of legitimacy to their usurpation, at least in the eyes of the vulgar, soon forgot the promises they had made. They gave the Mogul to understand, that particular circumstances would not suffer them to be concerned in such an enterprize; that some better opportunity was to be hoped for; and, to make up for all his losses, they assigned him a pension of six millions*, with the revenue of Allahabad, and Shah Ichana-

bad, or Delhi; upon which that unfortunate prince

* 262,500 l.

was reduced to subsist himself in one of the principal towns of the province of Banarez, where he has taken up his residence. Thus the Mogul empire comes to be shared between two governing powers, one of which is acknowledged in all the districts of India, where the English Company has any establishments and authority, the other in such provinces as border on Delhi, and in those parts to which the influence of that Company does not extend.

The English, thus become sovereigns of Bengal, have thought it necessary to keep up the shadow of ancient forms in a country where they have the lead; and, perhaps the only power that is likely to be secure and lasting. They govern the kingdom still under the name of a Nabob, who is of their nomination, and in their pay, and seems to give his orders. It is from him that all public acts seem to proceed and issue, though in fact the decrees of the council at Calcutta; so that the people, notwithstanding their change of masters, have for a considerable time been induced to believe, that they still submit only to the same yoke.

If we should wish to know the amount of the public revenues of Bengal, we shall find, at the period of the conquests, it was equal to fourscore millions *. The expences, either for the government, or defence of the province, were stated at 41 millions †; six millions ‡ were agreed to be given to the Mogul, and three millions § to the Nabob; so that the remainder to the Company was thirty millions §. Their purchases in the different markets of India might absorb a great part of this sum; but still it has been thought there must, after all, remain a surplus of several millions to be carried into Great Britain.

This new arrangement of matters, without having wrought any sensible change in the exterior form of the English Company, has essentially changed their object. They are no longer a trading body; they are a territorial power, which farms out its revenues in aid of a commerce that formerly was their sole existence, and

which
 * 3,500,000 l. † 1,793,750 l. ‡ 262,500 l. § 131,250 l.
 § 1,312,500 l.

which, notwithstanding the extension it has received, is no more than an additional object in the various combinations of their present real grandeur. The arrangements intended to give stability to a situation so prosperous, are, perhaps, the most reasonable that can be. England has at present in India an establishment to the amount of nine thousand eight hundred European troops, and fifty-four thousand Sipahis, well armed and well disciplined. Three thousand of these Europeans, and twenty-five thousand Sipahis, are dispersed along the borders of the Ganges.

The most considerable body of these troops has been stationed in Banarez, once the nurse of Indian science, and still the most famous academy of these rich countries, where European avarice pays no regard to any thing. This situation is chosen, because it appeared favourable for stopping the descent of the warlike mountaineers of the north; and, in case of attack, the maintaining of a war in a foreign territory would be less ruinous than in the countries of which the Company is to receive the revenues. On the south, as far as it has been found practicable, they have occupied all the narrow passes by which an enterprizing and active adversary might attempt to penetrate into the province. Dacca, which is in the center of it, sees under its walls a considerable force always ready to fly wherever their presence may be necessary. All the Nabobs and Rajahs, who are dependent on the Subah of Bengal, are disarmed, surrounded by spies in order to discover their conspiracies; and by troops to render them ineffectual.

In case of any unlucky revolution, which might oblige the victorious power to change its quarters, and abandon its posts, they have constructed a fort near Calcutta called Fort-William, which, in case of urgent necessity, would serve as a place of refuge for the army, should they be forced to retreat, and give time to expect the necessary reinforcements for the recovery of their superiority. This fort is a regular octagon, with eight bastions, several counter-guards, and some half-moons, already begun without a glacis, or covered way. The ditch of this fort may be about one hundred and sixty feet broad, its depth about eighteen. On the side of

the Ganges, the place is least strong, and the curtains are covered only with redans, over which there is a double battery raised on piles. The principal inconvenience of this citadel, whose construction cost twenty millions *, is, that it does not serve to protect Calcutta, which is now become the most important city in India, whose people amount to six hundred thousand souls, and has prodigious riches centered within her walls, and by a variety of circumstances is now become the theatre of a most extensive commerce : it must necessarily be the salubrity of the air, and the advantage of a very fortunate position, which have prevailed over every other consideration.

Notwithstanding the wise precautions taken by the English, they are not, and cannot be, without apprehensions. The Mogul power may gain strength, and wish to rescue one of its finest provinces out of the hands of a foreign oppressor. They have reason to fear that the barbarous nations may be again allured by the mildness of the climate. The princes now at variance may, perhaps, put an end to their contests, and re-unite in favour of their common liberty. It is not impossible but the Indians, who are in the pay of the victorious English, and actually constitute their force, may one day turn upon them those arms of which they have been taught the use. The grandeur of the Company, founded solely on delusion, may, perhaps, moulder away without their being actually driven from what they possess. It is well known that the Marattas have their eyes continually turned towards this fine country, and are constantly threatening it with invasion. Unless the English are successful enough, either by bribery or intrigue, to divert the storm, Bengal will be the object of pillage and rapine, whatever measures may be taken to oppose a light cavalry, whose alertness exceeds every thing we can say of it. The incursions of these ravagers may be repeated ; and then they will have less tribute to pay, but their expence must be increased. Supposing, however, that none of the mischiefs we have ventured to foresee, should take place, is it likely that

the revenues of Bengal should always continue the same? We must have leave to doubt it. The English Company no longer import silver into their settlements, but even export some for the use of their factories. Their agents make immense fortunes, and even private persons gain a tolerable competence, which they repair to the capital to enjoy. The other European nations find, in the treasures of this ruling power, accommodations which make it unnecessary to introduce new bullion. Must not all these combinations serve to bring about a blank in the reckoning of those countries, and such as will sooner or later force itself to be left in the making up of the public accounts?

That period might be at some distance, indeed, if the English, respecting the rights of humanity, were to rid those countries of the oppression under which they have groaned for so many ages. Then Calcutta, far from being an object of terror to the Indians, would be rendered a tribunal always open to the complaints of those unhappy sufferers whom tyranny should dare to molest. Property would grow into respect; so that the treasure which has been buried so long would be drawn out of the bowels of the earth, and fulfil its destined purpose. Agriculture and manufactures would be encouraged to such a degree, that the objects of export would become from day to day more considerable, and the Company, by following such maxims as these, instead of being driven to the necessity of lessening the tributes which they found established, might possibly find means to bring about an augmentation consistent with the general satisfaction of the natives. Let it not be said that such a plan is chimerical. The English Company of itself has already proved the possibility of it.

The Europeans, who have acquired any territory in India, for the most part chose for their farmers the natives of the country, from whom it is common to exact such considerable sums in advance, that, in order to pay them, they are obliged to borrow at an exorbitant interest. The distress which these greedy farmers voluntarily bring on themselves, obliges them to exact of the inhabitants to whom they underlet some parcels of the land, so considerable a rent, that the poor

wretches quit their villages, and abandon them for ever. The contractor, ruined by this elopement, which renders him insolvent, is dismissed to make room for a successor, who commonly meets with the same fate; so that it very frequently happens, that nothing but the first sum deposited is ever received from the estate, or very little more.

Different steps have been taken in the English colonies on the coast of Coromandel. It had been observed, that the villages had been formed by several families, who for the most part were connected with each other; this remark served to banish the custom of employing farmers. Every land was taxed at a rent certain by the year, and the head of the family was security for his relations and connections. This method united the colonists one with another, and created in them a disposition as well as the means of affording themselves a reciprocal support. This has occasioned the rise of the settlements of that nation to the utmost degree of prosperity they were capable of receiving: while those of her rivals were languishing for want of cultivation and manufactures, and consequently of population.

Why is not a mode of conduct, which does so much honour to reason and humanity, extended beyond the small territory of Madras? Can it then be true, that moderation of temper is a virtue, solely attached to moderate fortunes? The English Company, till these latter times, had always held a conduct superior to that of the other settlements. Their agents, their factors, were well chosen. The most part of them were young men of good families, already instructed in the rudiments of commerce, and such as were not afraid, when the service of their country called upon them, to cross those seas which England considers but as a part of her empire. The Company had generally regarded their commerce in a great scale, and had almost always carried it on like an association of true politicians as well as a body of merchants. Upon the whole, their planters, merchants, and soldiers, had retained their honesty, more regularity, and more firmness, than those of the other nations.

Who would ever have imagined that this same Company,

pany, by an immediate alteration of conduct, and change of system, should soon make the people of Bengal regret the despotism of their ancient masters? That fatal revolution has been but too sudden and too real. A settled tyranny has taken place of arbitrary authority. The exactions are become general and stated, the oppression continual and absolute. The destructive art of monopolies is carried to perfection, and new ones have been invented. In a word, they have altered and corrupted the public sources of confidence and happiness.

Under the government of the Mogul emperors, the Subahs, who had the care of the revenues, were, from the nature of their business, obliged to leave the receipt of them to Nabobs, Polygars, and Jemidars, who were a sort of under security to other Indians, and these still to others; so that the produce of the lands passed on, and was partly sunk, amidst a multitude of intermediate hands, before it came into the coffers of the Subah, who, on his part, delivered but a very small portion of it to the Emperor. This administration, faulty in many respects, had in it this favourable circumstance for the people, that the farmers never being changed, the rent of the farms remained always the same; because the least increase, as it disturbed the whole chain of advantage which every one perceived in his turn, would infallibly have occasioned a revolt: a terrible resource, but the only one left in favour of humanity in countries groaning under the oppressions of despotic rulers.

It is probable that, in the midst of these regulations, there were many injuries and partial distresses. But, at least, as the receipt of the public monies was made upon a fixed and moderate assessment, emulation was not totally extinguished. The cultivators of the land, being sure of laying up the produce of their harvest, after paying with exactness the rate of their farm, assisted the natural goodness of the soil by their labour; the weavers, masters of the price of their works, being at liberty to make choice of the buyer which best suited them, exerted themselves in extending and improving their manufactures. Both the one and the other, being easy on the head of their subsistence, yielded with

satisfaction to the most delightful inclinations of nature, or the prevailing fancy of their climate; and beheld in the increase of their family nothing more than the means of augmenting their riches. Such are evidently the reasons why industry, agriculture, and population, have been carried to such a length in the province of Bengal. One would think they might still be carried further under the government of a free people, friends to humanity; but the thirst of money, the most devouring, the most cruel of all passions, has given rise to a pernicious and destructive government.

The English, become sovereigns of Bengal, scarcely content to receive the revenues on the same footing as the ancient Subahs, have been desirous all at once to augment the produce of the farms, and to appropriate to themselves the rents. To accomplish both these objects, the English Company, that sovereign Company, are become the farmers to their own Subah, that is, to a creature on whom they have just conferred that empty title, the more securely to impose on the Indian people. The consequence of this new plan has been to pillage the farmers, in order to substitute in their room the Company's agents. They have also monopolized the sale of salt, tobacco, and betel, objects of the first consequence in those countries; but they have done this under the name, and apparently on the account of the Subah. They have gone still further, and have obliged the very same Subah to establish in their favour an exclusive privilege for the sale of cotton coming from any other province, in order to raise it to an exorbitant price. They have had the duties augmented, and, to conclude all, have obtained an edict, which has been published, to forbid all private Europeans trading in the interior parts of Bengal, and leaving it open and lawful only for the English.

When we reflect on such a barbarous prohibition, it seems as if it had been contrived on purpose to exhaust all the powers of doing mischief to that unfortunate country, whose prosperity, for their own sake, ought to be the only object of the English Company. Besides, it is easy to see that the personal avarice of the members of the council at Calcutta has dictated that shameful

law.

law. Their desire was, to ensure to themselves the produce of all the manufactures; at length to force the merchants of other nations, who chose to trade from one part of India to another, to purchase these articles of them at an exorbitant price, or to renounce their undertakings.

But still, in the midst of this overbearing conduct, so contrary to the advantage of their constituents, these treacherous agents have attempted to disguise themselves under the mask of zeal. It was necessary, say they, to export to England a quantity of merchandise proportioned to the extent of her commerce: but the competition of private traders was prejudicial to the purchases of the Company.

Under the same pretext, and in order to extend this exclusion to the foreign settlements, while they appear to respect their rights, they have of late years ordered more merchandise than Bengal could furnish. At the same time, the weavers have been forbidden to work for other nations, until the orders of the English Company were compleated. Thus the workmen, not being any longer at liberty to choose among the several purchasers, have been forced to deliver the fruits of their labour at the price they were pleased to give for them.

Let us consider too how these workmen have been paid. Here reason is confounded; we are at a loss for excuses or pretexts. The English, conquerors of Bengal, possessors of the immense treasures which the fruitfulness of the soil, and the industry of the inhabitants, had collected, have ventured to take upon themselves to alter the value of the specie. They have set the example of this meanness, unknown to the despotic rulers of Asia; and it is through this dishonourable act that they have announced to the natives their sovereignty over them. It is true, that such an operation, so contrary to the fidelity of trade and the public faith, could not last long. The Company themselves found the pernicious effects of it, and were resolved to call in all the false coin, in order to replace it with other money, perfectly conformable to that which was always current in those countries. But let us attend to the manner in which so necessary an alteration was conducted.

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They have struck in gold, rupees to the amount of about fifteen millions *, nominal value, but which represented in fact but nine millions †; for four tenths, or something more, was alloy. All who were found to possess these gold rupees of false alloy, were enjoined to bring them into the treasury at Calcutta, where they should be reimbursed for them in silver rupees; but, instead of ten rupees and a half of silver, which each gold rupee ought to be worth, according to its rate, they gave them but six; so that the amount of the alloy became the clear loss of the holder of their money.

An oppression so general must necessarily be attended with violence, and consequently they have several times been obliged to have recourse to force of arms to carry into execution the orders of the council at Calcutta. These forces have not been employed against the Indians alone; tumults and military preparations have again broke out on all sides, even in the midst of peace. The Europeans have been exposed to signal acts of hostility, and particularly the French, who, notwithstanding their being so reduced, and so weak, have still excited the jealousy of their former rivals.

If to the picture of public distress we were to add that of private extortions, we should find the agents of the Company, almost every where, exacting their tribute with extreme rigour, and raising contributions for them with the utmost cruelty. We should see them carrying a kind of inquisition into every family, and sitting in judgment upon every fortune; robbing indiscriminately the artizan and the labourer; imputing it as a crime against him that he is not sufficiently rich, and punishing him accordingly. We should view them selling their favour and their credit, as well to oppress the innocent as to screen the guilty. We should find, in consequence of these irregularities, despair seizing every heart, and an universal dejection getting the better of every mind, both tending to a general stop in the progress and activity of commerce, agriculture, and population.

It will be thought, without doubt, that, after these details, it was impossible that Bengal should have fresh evils

* 656,250l.

† 398,750l.

evils to dread: however, as if the elements, in league with mankind, had intended to bring all at once, upon the same people, every calamity that by turns lays waste the universe; a drought, of which there never had been an instance in those climates, came upon them, and prepared the way for a most dreadful famine in the most fertile of all countries.

In Bengal they have two harvests; one in April, the other in October. The first, which they call the little harvest, consists of the meaner grain; the second, styled the grand harvest, is singly of rice. The rains, which begin regularly in the month of August, and end in the middle of October, are the occasion of these different productions; and it was by a drought which happened in 1769, at the season when the rains are expected, that there was a failure in the great harvest of 1769, and the lesser harvest of 1770. It is true, that the rice on the higher grounds did not suffer greatly by this disturbance of the seasons, but there was far from a sufficient quantity for the nourishment of all the inhabitants of the country; besides, the English, who are engaged before hand to take proper care of their subsistence, as well as of the Sipahis belonging to them, did not fail to keep locked up in their magazine a part of the grain, though the harvest was insufficient.

They have been accused of having made a very bad use of that necessary precaution, in order to carry on the most odious and the most criminal of all monopolies. It may be true, that such a horrible method of acquiring riches may have tempted some individuals, but that the chief agents of the Company, that the council of Calcutta could have adopted and ordered such a destructive operation, that, to gain a few millions of rupees to the Company, the council should coolly have devoted to destruction several millions of their fellow-creatures, and by the most cruel means; this is a circumstance we never can credit. We even venture to pronounce it impossible; because such wickedness could never enter at once into the minds and hearts of a set of men, whose business it is to deliberate and act for the good of others.

But still this scourge did not fail to make itself felt throughout

throughout the whole of Bengal. Rice, which commonly sells at one sol * for three pounds, has gradually been raised till it came so high as to be sold at four sols † per pound, and it has even been up to five or six sols ‡; neither indeed was there any to be found; except in such places where the Europeans had taken care to collect it for their own use.

The unhappy Indians were every day perishing by thousands under this want of sustenance, without any means of help, and without any resource, not being able to procure themselves the least nourishment. They were to be seen in their villages, along the public ways, in the midst of our European colonies, pale, meagre, fainting, emaciated, consumed by famine; some stretched on the ground, in expectation of dying, others scarce able to drag themselves on to seek for any nutriment, and throwing themselves at the feet of the Europeans, intreating them to take them in as their slaves.

To this description, which makes humanity shudder, let us add other objects equally shocking; let imagination enlarge upon them, if possible; let us represent to ourselves infants deserted, some expiring on the breast of their mothers; every where the dying and the dead mingled together; on all sides the groans of sorrow, and the tears of despair; and we shall then have some faint idea of the horrible spectacle Bengal presented for the space of six weeks.

During this whole time the Ganges was covered with carcases; the fields and highways were choaked up with them; infectious vapours filled the air, and diseases multiplied; and one evil succeeding another, the plague had very nigh carried off the remainder of the inhabitants of that unfortunate kingdom. It appears, by calculations pretty generally acknowledged, that the famine carried off a fourth part; that is to say, nearly three millions.

But it is still more remarkable, and serves to characterise the gentleness, or rather the indolence, as well moral as natural, of these people, that, amidst this terrible distress, such a multitude of human creatures, pre-
sed

* $\frac{1}{2}$ d. † 2d. ‡ About 3d.

fed by the most urgent of all necessities, remained in an absolute inactivity, and made no attempts whatever for their self-preservation. All the Europeans, especially the English, were possessed of granaries, and these very granaries were respected: private houses were so too; no revolt, no murders, not the least violence prevailed. The unhappy Indians, resigned to a quiet despair, confined themselves to the request of that succour they did not obtain, and peaceably waited the relief of death.

Let us now represent to ourselves any part of Europe afflicted by a similar calamity. What disorder! what fury! what atrocious acts! what crimes would ensue! how should we have seen among us Europeans, some contending for their food with their dagger in hand, some pursuing, some flying, and, without remorse, cutting one another's throats. How should we have seen men at last turn their rage on themselves, tearing and devouring their own limbs, and, in the blindness of despair, trampling under foot all authority, as well as every sentiment of nature and reason.

Had it been the fate of the English to have had the like events to dread on the part of the people of Bengal, perhaps the famine would have been less general, and less destructive. For, setting aside, as perhaps we ought, every charge of monopoly, no one will undertake to defend them against the reproach of negligence, and insensibility. And in what circumstance have they merited that reproach? In the very instant of time when the life or death of several millions of their fellow-creatures was in their power. One would think that, in such an alternative, the very love of mankind, that sentiment innate in all hearts, might have inspired them with resources. Might not the poor wretches, expiring before the eyes of the Europeans, with reason have cried out, "Is it then but for our ruin that you are fertile in expedients for your own preservation? The immense treasures which a long succession of ages had accumulated in this country, you have made your own spoils; you have transported them into your own country; you have raised contributions on us; you have got your agents to receive them for you; you are masters of our interior commerce; you

" you are the sole managers of all our exported mer-
 " chandise; your numerous vessels, laden with the pro-
 " duce of our industry and our soil, pass and repass to
 " the enriching of your factories and your colonies.
 " All these things you regulate and carry on for your
 " own advantage. But what have you done for our
 " preservation? What expedients have you used to re-
 " move from us the scourge that threatened us? De-
 " prived of all authority, stripped of our property,
 " weighed down by the terrible hand of power, we
 " can only lift our hands to you, to implore your as-
 " sistance. Ye have heard our groans; ye have seen
 " famine making very quick advances upon us; and
 " then ye attended to your own preservation. Ye have
 " hoarded up the small quantity of provisions which
 " came to maturity; ye have filled your granaries with
 " them, and distributed them among your soldiers.
 " But we, the sad dupes of your avarice, wretches in
 " every respect, as well by your tyranny as by your
 " indifference, ye treat us like slaves, while you sup-
 " pose we have any riches; but, when it appears we
 " are but a set of beings full of wants, then you no
 " longer regard us even as human creatures. Of what
 " service is it to us that you have the management of
 " our public forces entirely in your hands? Where are
 " the laws and the morals of which ye are so proud?
 " What then is that government whose wisdom you so
 " much boast of? Have you put a stop to the prodigi-
 " ous exports carried on by your private traders?
 " Have ye changed the destination of your ships?
 " Have they traversed the neighbouring seas in search
 " of the means of subsistence for us? Have ye request-
 " ed it of the adjacent countries? Ah! why has Pro-
 " vidence suffered you to break the chain which at-
 " tached us to our ancient sovereigns? Less grasping,
 " and more humane than you are, they would have
 " invited plenty from all parts of Asia; they would
 " have opened every communication; they would have
 " lavished their treasures, and have thought they did
 " but enrich themselves while they preserved their sub-
 " jects."

" This last reflection, at least, was calculated to make

an

an impression on the English, supposing even that every sentiment of humanity was extinguished in their hearts by the effects of depravity. The barrenness had been announced by a drought; and it is not to be doubted, that, if, instead of having solely a regard to themselves, and remaining in an entire negligence of every thing else, they had from the first taken every precaution in their power, they might have accomplished the preservation of many lives that were lost.

It was impossible than that an administration, so faulty in itself should not defeat the means of prosperity attached to the possession of those vast countries. The Company, pressed by real necessities, and finding only insufficient resources in those treasures which served to dazzle their imagination, has already been obliged to tear aside the veil which concealed their situation from the eyes of the world. According to a calculation, authenticated on the first of January 1773, the total amount of the Company's possessions in Europe, whether in arrears hereafter to be received, or in real merchandize now in their storehouses, or even in immoveables, comes to the sum of 175,156,000 livres *; whereas their engagements amount to 207,430,000 livres †; so that there is a deficiency of 32,274,000 livres ‡. It is true, that the means of the Company in India, that is to say, their specie in the chests of their different settlements, outstanding debts due to them, the value of their merchandizes, their civil and military preparations, their elephants, ships, and cargoes at sea, form a capital of 143,939,000 livres §. On the other hand, their debts are not less than the sum of 45,726,000 livres ||; so that, upon the whole of their affairs in India, there is a balance in their favour of 98,213,000 livres ¶. From this must be deducted what the Company owes in Europe, that is to say, 32,274,000 livres **, which reduces the sum of the general account to 65,939,000 livres ††; and as the amount of their stock is 72,000,000 livres ‡‡; it follows, that on their capital there is a real

* 7,763,075 l.	† 9,076,062 l. 10s.	‡ 2,411,987 l. 10s.
\$ 6,297,331 l. 5s.	2,000,512 l. 10s.	¶ 4,296,818 l. 15s.
+ 1,411,987 l. 10s.	++ 2,884,831 l. 5s.	‡‡ 3,150,000 l.
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real loss of 6,061,000 livres *. So that, in case all the effects of the Company, as well in Europe as in India, could be converted into money, a supposition extremely in their favour, the proprietors would not find their original deposit. Doubtless it was not easy to suspect their situation to be such, when we find the sales of the Company have progressively risen from 44,000,000 livres †, the amount of that in 1762, to 80,000,000 livres ‡, according to the account of that of 1769. The trade of the Company has been carried to such a pitch, that the sales for these last ten years, to 1771 inclusive, have produced the net sum of 649,207,000 livres §. But it is essential to remark, that, during the said period, the Company paid, for different duties, to which their goods are subject, to the amount of 170,665,000 livres ¶, that is, more than five and twenty per cent. on the produce of the sales. And still this sum, so considerable as it is, is exclusive of an annual stipend of 9,000,000 livres ||; on which condition government has given up to the Company all territorial rights over Bengal.

To make good engagements so extensive, and to distribute at the same time to the proprietors a dividend of 9,000,000 livres ++, at the rate of twelve and a half per cent. the revenues of India should have been managed with great wisdom and economy: then they would have been sufficient, not only for the purchases the Company makes in India, but for those made in China, and they might have waved sending any sums to their small factories. It was with this confidence that the proprietors of stock enjoyed peaceably their dividend, and even expected it to be raised by the importation of money which had been announced to them. But so far was the event from answering their expectation, that the Company's agents at Bengal, Bombay, and Madras, have continually drawn upon them to make good the insufficiency of the revenues. The money drawn by them during the last five years, viz. from

1768

* 265,168 l. 13 s.	† 1,925,000 l.	‡ 3,500,000 l.
§ 28,402,806 l. 5 s.	¶ 7,466,593 l. 15 s.	393,750 l.
	++ 393,750 l.	

1768 to 1772, both inclusive, amounts to the sum of 49,250,000 livres *. These draughts have made it unnecessary to send out coin to India; but, during the same period, they have been obliged to remit to China the sum of 20,000,000 livres †. And even this remittance not having been answerable to the prodigious purchases made for the Company at Canton, the factory there have been obliged to draw on them for 7,780,000 livres ‡. The Company, moreover, have exported to India, within the same time, as much as 60,140,000 livres || of merchandize; so that, adding together these sums, it appears, that during these five years which seemed likely to be the period of their greatest prosperity, the Company, whether by exportations abroad, or by draughts paid in Europe, has employed in trade 137,590,000 livres §, which, one year with another, makes the sum of 27,515,000 livres ¶. Notwithstanding, however, this prodigious difference between the speculations and the real transactions, if the revenues of Bengal had not been subject to unparalleled depredations, the Company might have been enabled to support with ease all their expences, and still continue a dividend of twelve and a half per cent. to the stockholders. The proof of this will appear in the abstract of their commerce, calculated upon the receipts and disbursements of the last years, on the experience of which it may be proper to ground our opinion of the actual state of things.

R E C E I P T.

	<i>Livres.</i>
Produce of their sales, deducting discount,	78,750,000 a
Produce of duties for the benefit of the	
Company laid on private trade	560,000 b
Value of 500 tons of salt-petre wanted	
annually for the army	500,000 c
Total	79,810,000 d

D I S.

* 2,154,687 l. 10s.	† 875,000 l.	‡ 340,375 l.	2,656,625 l.
§ 6,019,562 l. 10s.	¶ 1,203,781 l. 5s.		a 3,445,312 l. 10s.
b 24,500 l.	c 21,875 l.		d 3,491,687 l. 10s.

DISBURSEMENTS.

	<i>Livres.</i>
Amount of duties	20,250,000 <i>a</i>
Freight and charges out	11,250,000 <i>b</i>
Value of goods annually exported	11,250,000 <i>c</i>
Amount of bullion exported to China, and of the draughts the factory there draws annually on the Company	4,500,000 <i>d</i>
The impost of five per cent. on the rough produce of the annual sales, set at eighty- four millions	4,200,000 <i>e</i>
Bills of exchange taken from different parts of India	8,080,000 <i>f</i>
Annual stipend to be paid to government on account of Bengal	9,000,000 <i>g</i>
Annual dividend on the footing of twelve and a half per cent. per annum	9,000,000 <i>h</i>
Interest of bills beyond what the Com- pany receives of government	1,120,000 <i>i</i>
Total	78,650,000 <i>k</i>

If, from the amount of the receipt, stated at 79,810,000 livres *l*, we deduct the latter sum of 78,650,000 livres *m*, the surplus of the receipt will be 1,160,000 livres *n*.

This state, the several articles of which having undergone the inspection of parliament cannot be called in question, serves to shew, that, even supposing a wiser administration, both at home and in India, the proprietors had no reason to expect any advantage beyond the dividend of twelve and a half per cent. which had been fixed for them.

But,

a 885,937 l. 10s.

d 196,875 l.

g 393,750 l.

k 3,440,937 l. 10s.

b 492,187 l. 10s.

e 183,750 l.

h 393,750 l.

j 3,491,687 l. 10s.

n 50,750 l.

c 492,187 l. 10s.

f 353,500 l.

i 49,000 l.

m 3,440,937 l. 10s.

But, if we ascend from the particular interest of the trading Company to considerations that are more extensive, what resources, what advantages, does not the commerce of India procure to the state? The amount of duties on the goods imported by the Company, the impost of five per cent. on the rough produce of their sales, the stipend exacted by government on account of Bengal, form a tribute of 33,450,000 livres *, paid annually to Great Britain out of the commerce and possessions of Asia. And so long as the public treasure, supported by this new branch of revenue, turns it to the improvement of the power and prosperity of the kingdom, the annual mass of riches is still increased, by the exports of the Company's merchandise, by the charges of their navigation, by the benefit of the dividend, at eight and a half above the common interest, by the draughts they pay, since these draughts are the representatives of the fortunes made by their agents in their service, and which they return home to enjoy. All these articles brought together, constitute nearly a total of 40,000,000 livres †, expended on the commerce of India to the advantage of the land and manufactures of England: and yet this sum of 40,000,000 livres †, together with the other of 33,450,000 livres ‡, received by the government, require no more than an export of 2 or 3,000,000 in bullion §. Thus the purse of the state and the kingdom are equally enriched by the produce of a commerce, which, by the good effect of a most extraordinary management, threatens with ruin the very proprietors who farm it out to their agents.

It is easy to judge, from the sketch just given, that for a long time they must sacrifice their dividends to clear away entirely that deficiency of 32,000,000 livres ¶, which has taken place in their affairs in Europe: but it will be still more difficult, to revive in India the order and œconomy necessary for discharging

H h 3 the

* 1,463,437 l. 10 s. † 1,750,000 l. ‡ 1,750,000 l.

§ About 109,000 l. on an average,

¶ 1,400,000 l.

the debt of 45,000,000 livres *, contracted there on the Company's account †.

We must allow, that the corruption to which the English have given themselves up from the first beginning

* 1,968,750 l.

† If the English were constantly to practise in Bengal acts of humanity, justice, and sound policy, whereof they have shewed fair appearances in the narrow territories they have hitherto possessed, we should applaud their success; we should, perhaps, have more hopes than they of seeing prosperity revive in a soil which nature has embellished, but wherein the havocs of despotism have not altogether ceased. Being fully persuaded of the right all men have to labour for the happiness of their fellow creatures, we should wink at the irregularity of usurpations which have avowedly stripped tyrants. We should be very happy to think, that the revolutions which overturned these rich countries would have a final period. Perhaps we should join with the politicians who are continually urging Great Britain to complete the conquest of Indostan. Unhappily we dare not entertain such agreeable hopes.

The English Company has hitherto observed a conduct superior to that of all other nations. This we allow. Their agents and factors have been well chosen. The chief among them are young gentlemen of family, most carefully educated in merchants counting-houses in London. They bring with them to Asia, knowledge of trade, morals, and a habit of industry. The free merchants, who are enriched under their protection, and some individuals, have appeared often as much attached to the Company's interest as their own. They have often viewed trade in its most extensive form, and have always carried it on as a Society of true politicians, as well as a Company of real merchants. These merchants, these military persons, have hitherto preserved better morals, discipline, and vigour, than those of other nations; but we may foretell, that they will be corrupted at last.

Rulers without controul in an empire where they were only merchants, the English can hardly refrain from making a wrong use of their power. They will have under their eye the despots of Asia. They will be familiarized with the excesses which at first startled English virtue. Corruption will creep into their colonies. It will begin by the military, a species of men who, in all nations, pay the least regard to morals. The lowest rank of the merchants will soon be corrupted. The Company's servants, formerly so well chosen, for some time will be their censors, and will finish the scene by being their accomplices.

When this period happens, which is perhaps not very remote, the Indians will be sensible, that they have lost by changing their masters. Not being any longer supported by that fanaticism which made their fetters supportable, they will feel all the weight of the yoke that has been laid on them. The foreign authority, deprived of this enticing charm, which seems to ennoble slavery, will only have its own natural powers to overawe them. These will not be sufficient

ning of their power, the oppression which has succeeded it, the abuses every day multiplying, the entire loss of all principle; all these circumstances together, form a contrast totally disagreeing with their past conduct in India, and the real constitution of their government in Europe. But this sort of problem in morals will be easily solved, if we consider with attention the natural effect of circumstances and events.

Being now become absolute rulers in an empire where they were but traders, it was very difficult for the English not to make a bad use of their power. At a distance from home, men are no longer restrained by the fear of being ashamed to see their countrymen. In a warm climate, where the body loses its vigour, the mind must lose some of its force. In a country where nature and custom lead to effeminacy, men are apt to be seduced. In countries where they come for the purpose of growing rich, they easily forget to be upright.

Perhaps, however, in a situation so dangerous, the English would have preserved, at least, some appearance of moderation and virtue, had they been checked by the restraint of the laws: but there were none to direct or to bind them. The regulations made by the Company for the carrying on of their commerce did not apply to this new state of things; and the English government, considering the conquest of Bengal but as a help towards increasing numerically the revenue of Great Britain, gave up to the Company, for 9,000,000 livres * per annum, the destiny of twelve millions of people.

Happily for this portion of our fellow-creatures, a revolution, of a peaceable nature, is at hand: the nation has sufficient to counterbalance their despair, and the assistance which restless and ambitious neighbours will continually be giving them. Three thousand banditti, rather lost than dispersed, in a tract of country between 700 and 800 leagues, will be easily massacred: and in their graves will be buried these agreeable chimeras which now-a-days occasion such a general intoxication. The English Company will find themselves without territories, revenue, morals, and trade, as it has happened to the French, as we shall have occasion to observe in the next book.

has been struck with such enormous excesses; she has heard the groans of such a number of victims, sacrificed to the avarice and passions of some individuals. The parliament is already employed on this great object. Every detail of that administration is under their inspection, every fact will be cleared up, every abuse unveiled, the reasons of them inquired into, and removed. What a sight to be presented to Europe! What an example to be left to posterity! The hand of liberty is going to weigh the destiny of a whole people in the scale of justice.

“ Yes, august legislators, ye will make good our expectations! Ye will restore humanity to her rights; ye will put a curb on avarice, and break the yoke of tyranny. The authority of law, which is not to be shaken, will every where take place of an administration purely arbitrary. At sight of that authority, the monopolist, that tyrant over industry, will forever disappear. The fetters which private interest has rivetted on commerce ye will make to give way to general advantage.

“ You will not confine yourselves to this momentary reformation: you will carry your views into futurity; you will calculate the influence of climate, the danger of circumstances, the contagion of example; and, to prevent their consequences, you will select persons without connections, without passions, to visit these distant countries. Issuing from the bosom of your metropolis, they are to pass thro’ these provinces, in order to hear complaints, rectify abuses, redress injuries; in a word, to maintain and reunite the ties of order throughout the country.

“ By the execution of this salutary plan, you will, without doubt, have contributed much towards the happiness of these people; but not enough for your own honour. One prejudice you have still to conquer, and that victory is worthy of yourselves. Venture to put your new subjects into a situation to enjoy the sweets of property. Portion out to them the fields on which they were born; they will learn to cultivate them for themselves. Attached to you by these favours, more than ever they were by fear,
“ they

“ they will pay with joy the tribute you impose with
 “ moderation. They will instruct their children to a-
 “ dore and admire your government; and successive
 “ generations will transmit down, with their inheri-
 “ tance, the sentiments of their happiness mixed with
 “ that of their gratitude.

“ Then shall the friends of humanity applaud your
 “ success; they will incline to hope they may once
 “ more see prosperity revive in a country embellished
 “ by nature, and no longer ravaged by despotism. It
 “ will be pleasing to them to think, that the calamities
 “ which afflicted those fertile countries are for ever
 “ removed from them. They will pardon in you those
 “ usurpations which have been only for the despoiling
 “ of tyrants, and they will invite you to new conquests,
 “ when they see the influence of your sublime constitu-
 “ tion of government extending itself even to the very
 “ extremities of Asia, to give birth to liberty, proper-
 “ ty, and happiness.”

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.